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A FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED BY THE REVEREND TIMOTHY ROGERS, ON THE
DEATH OF MR. SAMUEL HILL,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE JANUARY, 1692-3.

[WE have the pleasure of presenting our readers, this month, with an unpublished sermon of a celebrated nonconformist divine, the Rev. Timothy Rogers, of the Old Jewry. It is uncertain in what year he was born, but it must have been but a very short time before the Restoration. He died about 1729, aged 70. He was the author of several pieces; the chief of which is his well-known treatise on "Trouble of Mind and Melancholy;" a subject of which he was, unhappily, but too well qualified to treat. We had intended to enter somewhat fully into his history and character, but the length of the "Sermon" forbids it. We must reserve this, therefore, for some future opportunity. A portrait is given of him in "Wilson's Dissenting Churches." If it be a *likeness*, he must have resembled, in an extraordinary degree, the late Robert Hall.]

LUKE xii. 35, 36 — "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may open to him immediately."

It is a mercy that we live, and a greater mercy that we have the hopes of eternal life when this is at an end. It is a mercy to us that we are spared, when others in our view are snatched away by death; that we are in the vineyard of God and the assemblies of his people, whilst those are cut down who, it may be, flourished with more fruit than we. It is not a year ago, that the Providence of God, at whose disposal we and our friends are, called us to solemnize in this place, the funeral of our once dear acquaintance, Mr. Edmund Hill,* and now by the death of his bro-

* See Wilson's Dissenting Churches, vol. II. p. 331, note.

ther, Mr. Samuel Hill, we are called upon to consider how vain a thing man is, even in his best estate. There is but a little distance between his rising and his setting, between his spring and winter, between his life and death. Our friend in the morning of his age is gone; when his youth gave, not many months ago, a prospect of a much longer stay in this world. But seeing we are once to pass that gulf which he hath shot, and to go through that strait and narrow gate, where he is already entered, let us not with vain tears bewail a loss which cannot be repaired. Though we want his conversation, let us benefit by his example, and his change, which does loudly bespeak us, in the words of our Saviour, Let your loins be girded, &c.

I shall first explain these words; then raise some observations from them.

1. *Let your loins be girded about.* This is expressed suitably to the custom of those eastern people that wore long and loose garments, and such as reached down to their feet; and when they were to enter on a journey, or to go to war, or to pursue their domestic affairs in the quality of servants, they girded up these garments about them, that they might not be an hindrance or an inconvenient load to them; so by this expression Christ signifies that his servants should be always expecting the commands of him their heavenly Master, and be ready to do what he bids them. This was the posture of attendants, as in John xiii. 4.

2. The second expression is, *Let your lights be burning,* that so they might be more prepared to wait upon him. Our present pilgrimage in this world is covered

with so much ignorance and darkness, that we travel as in the night, and have need of burning lights that we may not lose our way, nor stumble into the pit of hell. There are abundance of the works of darkness which we must avoid, and of which we must beware with a most tender caution, because the night is apt to cast a veil upon them that they cannot be discerned. These lights that we must be furnished with, are the light of faith, and the light that shines from the word of God; and these two are our surest guides to conduct us through the difficulties and dangers of this present world. Psalm cxix. 105, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* Prov. vi. 23, *The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.*

3. *Ye yourselves like unto men that wait for the Lord,* when he will return from the wedding, that when he knocketh, (he does many ways indeed knock at our hearts by his word, his ordinances, and his providences,) open immediately, *i. e.* calmly and with a full consent of will; when he will return from the wedding, *i. e.* from heaven, the joys whereof are frequently compared to a marriage feast, for there is no grief, nor mourning, nor lamentation there. In this verse, Christ, as some observe, has given us the substance of Christian philosophy, or of true wisdom; for every discipline which is ordered to a fixed end consists of three parts. 1. The explaining of that end. 2. The discovery of the means to attain it. 3. The removing of impediments. So here we have the end proposed, *viz.* the coming of our Lord to bless his faithful servants, and the means that we are to use in order to it, to have our loins

girded, which will remove all hindrances.

Obs. 1. The love and care that Christ manifests to his servants. He is not satisfied to be at ease and blessed himself, but he would have them also to share in his unspeakable felicities: he will come from the wedding: he, in the midst of his joys, compassionates their sorrows, and will one day fetch them from this troublesome world to his own glory.

2. This world is a place full of darkness and of danger; ignorance and misery, and corruption of manners do almost every where prevail.

3. It becomes the disciples of Christ to be ready to leave so dark a world as this, and to wait for their Lord's coming.

1. What is implied in having our lights burning?

2. Why we ought to be thus ready?

3. The use.

1. That our persons be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, and that we have by faith a part in his righteousness, and in the merit of his death, for otherwise our sins will not be pardoned, nor we like to men that wait for their Lord. Without this, guilt will overwhelm our hearts, and how unfit shall we be to open to him when we are in a state of condemnation. We shall dread his coming as the malefactor does the presence of the judge. The great day will appear very formidable to us. We shall use the wicked arts of the careless unprovided world, and cast that day out of our thoughts. In a more happy frame was our apostle, Phil. iii. 9.

II. To be like to men that wait for the Lord, is not to be satisfied with a bare profession of religion. The foolish virgins had their lamps as well as the wise: they

associated with them, and were visible members of the same church, and their light yielded as great a blaze and show as that of others did. It is not enough that your ministers or your holy friends think you to be very good, unless you be truly so: the Lord, when he comes, will see through all your disguises, all your insincere pretences, with his quick and piercing eye: he knows that deceitfulness which lies hid in our hearts, and which others do not know; and how little, how very little will it signify, if all the world acquit us, if he condemn and know us not. Hypocrisy, by the counterfeit resemblances that it has of truth, may in this world pass for grace, but all its paint will be washed away when the Judge comes.

III. To be like unto them that wait for the Lord is to be conformable to him whom we expect. We must have our natures renewed. To have our lights burning implies watching, and watching is a vital act. You must be awakened from the sleep of death, and not suffer the pleasures of this world, or of sin, to close your eyes again. Christ must appear to your understandings as the most excellent object, as the chiefest of ten thousands, to your wills as the most amiable good, and you must love him above all, as vested with so many qualifications; and to this you will be excited when you consider how holy your coming Lord is, and what a strict search every action of your life must then undergo, and the vast distinction that will then be made between the precious and the vile, the wise and foolish, the good and bad, 2 Pet. iii. 14.

IV. To have your loins girded, &c. implies, not only that you have true grace, but that you have grace in exercise. You must not

only be prepared for the Lord, but advance a considerable way to meet him. It is not sufficient that you have once bewailed your sins; but you are still to look upon them with grieved hearts and flowing eyes, that so when he appears he may find you in the posture of Mary after the resurrection, weeping for his absence, and then the discoveries of himself will change your tears of grief into those of joy. You must be ready to every good work, Tit. iii. 1. that when you are called to pray, you may cheerfully pour out your supplications, and when you are called to bear the cross, you may with delight lay it on your shoulders, and bear it with patience, and when you are called to depart, you may freely die.

V. To be employed in that work which he hath given us to do. We are but stewards, and it is required of such that they be found faithful, 1 Cor. iv. 12. We must not waste what estate or plenty God hath bestowed upon us, for all we have is his. Nor is our strength or health, or any thing we enjoy, our own. God hath set us all a task to do, and that is to rule our passions, to correct our faults, to grow in knowledge, faith, and hope, to use in a right manner, and to a right end, all the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost. Matt. xxv. 14, 15. Every one of us are to use our talents for our Master's praise, as of old all offered to the tabernacle gold, or silver, or brass, or shittim-wood, or goats' hair, or badgers' skins; so when Christ travelled to Jerusalem, some strewed the way with garments, others cut down branches, some cried, Hosannah; and every one in several ways discovered their love.

VI. To have your loins girded is to embrace all opportunities and

occasions of doing good, and of promoting the religion and the cause of Christ, to make it your whole business and delight to spread his kingdom, to gain him subjects, and earnestly to wish and strive that he may have more hearts to love him and more voices to set forth his praise. You must be always abounding in the work of the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. last. Your zeal must provoke many, without cooling itself; it may excite and quicken others, as one lighted candle may give light to another, and not burn the worse itself: your lights must shine forth to the glory of your Master, Matt. v. 16; and others must be refreshed with your communicated beams. In imitation of Christ, you must go about doing good. You must show kindness to the poor and needy, clothe the naked, and visit such as are imprisoned; succour the tempted, relieve the doubting; let all the places where you come be better for your presence; take all occasions to speak of Jesus, commend your Master; this is my beloved and this is my friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. v. 16.

VII. Keep your evidences for salvation clear and bright; live not in uncertainty, whether you belong to Christ or not; give yourselves no rest till you find he is your Lord and Saviour, that you are in him by faith, and that he is in you the hope of glory.

VIII. This implies a frequent remembrance of his coming; not be like those scoffers, 2 Pet. iii. 4. We must steadfastly believe it as one of the greatest truths, and have the thoughts thereof engraven daily on our hearts. We have a very good foundation for our faith from the nature of God, his justice and his holiness, which will not suffer sin always to be unpunished; nor

will he suffer those disorders, that now somewhat eclipse the glory of his creation, always to remain. The lesser judgments that are sent upon the world are forerunners of a greater: we are sure, that though our Lord, for wise reasons and for very great ends, is pleased to delay, yet he will come. We are sure of it from his own word and promises; from the present condition of his people, and the desires that he kindles in their hearts for his appearance; nor will he lose the purchase of his death. That our particular judgment is drawing on, we know by the sight of others that leave the world. Let nothing change our apprehension of it; let nothing make us apply our minds more unconcernedly to it, or render the thought of so plain a truth superficial and confused; and especially, let us not slight that solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper, which was instituted to give us a perpetual remembrance of it. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

IX. It implies a readiness to die, whenever God pleases; as Luther in his sickness said, 'Strike, Lord, strike mercifully, for I am ready.' This is to open immediately to Christ; to have nothing else to do but to die; and when the lamp of life is extinguished, to go to the light of glory.

Reasons why we should be thus ready.

Reason 1. We know not when our Lord will come, Luke xii. 46. Of that day and hour knows no man. You know not when the last trumpet shall give its dreadful sound, and the dead be raised. You know not whether he will come to you in the first, the second, or the third watch; in youth, in manhood, or old age. You know not when the diseases that are the harbingers of death shall arrive, nor how long you shall be sick, nor

whether you shall die by a lingering or a sudden death. The cry to meet the bridegroom was at midnight, a time of the deepest silence; and though you may in your thoughts put the evil day far off, yet it will not come with a slower pace for all that; but this we know, that once dead, and ever either happy or miserable.

2. It is a dreadful thing to be unprepared when our Lord comes. If we have not our work dispatched, what shall we say for all the leisure and time that we have had? When we are at our journey's end, and have travelled in the wrong way; when our space that was given us wherein to repent is past, and we have not repented; when our Lord, that spared us so long, will not spare us a day, nor an hour, nor a minute longer; what shall support when he gives us gall and wormwood? How terrible was the case of the foolish virgins. They made a glorious profession; they had their lamps; they were insensible of danger; they slept. Alas! they little thought the time was so near, after which they should never sleep more. When the voice called, they arose and trimmed their lamps, and went to meet the bridegroom, and thought he would have been their friend; but their foolish hopes left them, and they found they had no grace at all.

3. God hath placed us here in a state of trial, and has allowed us our day wherein to work; but when our sun is once set, it will never rise again. When we have taken up our dwelling in the grave, we shall not change our lodging till the judgment come; and as we laid down in dust, so shall we arise. After death the soul does quickly know its doom: it either sees the frowns or the smiles of God; and shall, according to what

passes, then see him frown or smile for ever, and will either be in heaven or hell; then it must either be well or miserable, without the possibility of an alteration.

4. Our Lord will admit none with him into his kingdom, but such as are prepared for it. Whosoever is intended for a living stone in that glorious building, must be squared and fitted for it here below. The crown there is kept only for such as have fought the good fight of faith. That rest is only the portion of such as have here undergone various calamities and tribulations. Our great Master will give no rewards but to those who have been faithful to the last, to those that have obeyed his commands, and kept their garments undefiled. Here, in the visible church, the chaff and the purer grain are often mingled together; hypocrites and sincere Christians share in the same outward privileges; but then he will own his image, and reject those who have but a counterfeit resemblance of it: he will make a great difference between the precious and the vile: he will treasure up his jewels, but he will throw away those unsound professors that shined indeed, but with an artificial and a painted light.

5. It is greatly for the honour of our Lord, as well as for our own safety, that we be like to men who look for him; it shows that we like his service, and believe the promises that he has made; and it should signify a great deal to us, that the glory of Christ may be more eminently displayed by what we now do, for he will come to be glorified and admired by all that believe, 2 Thess. i. 10. He will look upon all his people with delight, because they are pure and without blemish, and they will wonder at his grace that made them to be so. He will be satisfied when he sees

the travail of his soul, that his pains, his agonies, and his sorrows, were not in vain; and they will be infinitely pleased with the sight of all the wondrous passages and manifestations of his love.

6. Our Lord will surely come, whether we be ready or unready for his coming. Though we loiter in the vineyard, yet he does not abate the swiftness of his course. The time of assize will be observed, though the malefactors that are to be judged play, and sleep, and dream their time away.

Use of exhortation.

1. Be very watchful, Matt. xxv. 13. And in this duty is implied all manner of care, lest we be surprised together with a foresight of danger. The enemies we are to watch against, are the world, the devil, and the flesh.

2. Behave yourselves as strangers and pilgrims here on earth; and this is implied in having our loins girded, as ready to decamp and march away to another world, when our Lord shall give us notice to be gone. As strangers, you must bear affronts from those that know you not, only you may sweeten your sorrows with the frequent remembrance of your dearest home. A Christian in this world is like a king that is in disguise in a foreign land; they give him, it may be, sorry entertainment, for they know not his worth and dignity. This world is full of deceitful appearances, and imaginary honours, and false riches; therefore often raise your longing eyes towards that heaven, whence Christ hath promised to return; towards that heaven where there are pure and undecaying joys and peace for evermore; and in the clear view of that superior world, say, O, how admirable are thy tabernacles, O Lord God of hosts! and then look with disdain upon all the meaner

glories that are so much doated on here below ; regard all the goods and pleasures of this world with the same eye with which you would look upon an inn from which you are to depart the next day. A traveller, as one expresses it, passing through a strange country, sees what is good and pleasant, but does not stop his journey ; considers the manners and customs of the people, without complying with them : he sees their quarrels with one another, but meddles not with their strifes ; sees their marriages, their alliances, their feasts, their joys, but all does not hinder him from travelling to his home. So should you with some unconcernedness regard the goods or evils of this life, for you are travelling to another place.

3. Choose that company in which you would have your Lord to find you when he comes.

4. Beware of all delays in your preparation. Many a man reckons upon twenty or thirty years of life, when, it may be, he hath not a month or a day to live. Those that begin soonest, find that their day is short enough wherein to work. Oh ! remember the foolish virgins : they would at last fain have had oil, but it was too late. If you would have Christ to know you at that day, you must be acquainted with him now. It is also for your own advantage not to delay, for the longer you are serviceable, the greater will your weight of glory be.

5. Beware of intemperance and luxury. Consider all that you have, your money, your bodies, and your souls, are God's. Luke xxi. 34.

6. Use yourselves to serious thoughts of death. Say, the time will come when I am to die ; when my pain will take away the relish and the taste of all my pleasures ;

when my soul shall be upon the wing, in the last minutes of time, and in the very entrance of eternity. Oh, what a prospect will you then have.

7. Have a care of too much business. Some loiter and some labour too hard, and both are criminal. A little will bear your charges to the grave. Oh ! what a terrible hearing will it be to hear the summons of death, when you are full of business, and have never seriously thought of death till your dying day. Who would choose to die in a crowd, or to go to his eternity from the exchange. O take heed that your trades and shops do not hinder your closets, nor your employment your religion. Keep constant seasons of retirement every day ; and often say, Am I fit to die ? Could I be satisfied to go to judgment now, even in this moment ? Is my lamp trimmed, and my sins pardoned ? Amidst all your business, think of death, and of your acquaintance who are now dead, and that a while ago were as busy and as throng as you. Consider how sorry a thing this world will be when you are departing. O how will the worldling then wish that he had spent his time more for the glory of God, and the promoting of his service. All your bags will not purchase one poor night's sleep, nor alleviate your pains, nor bribe death to stay a minute : only they may procure finer grave-clothes, a better coffin, and a more stately funeral. And lo ! this is the mighty all, or rather the mighty nothing, for which men lay out so many thoughts, and so much time. When you have too much business, your thoughts of God will be very few, and your prayers lukewarm, if you pray at all. Consider, the most busy must find time to die. Young persons, when they are just

setting out into the world, are full of briskness, and promise themselves an unquestionable success in all that they go about; but in a few years their motion will be more slow, age and experience, and frequent vexations, will teach them that all is vanity. Suppose death should come and say—I summon thee this hour—this night—to appear at the bar of the great God, would you not be ready to say, Oh! stay a little, for I have an house to build, or a new state of life in view; such a ship is expected home; such a child is to be disposed of? All this, and a thousand more vain excuses, will not turn your glass. I have mentioned this more largely, because our departed friend did often bewail that he had been too eager for the world, but blessed God that his sickness had weaned him from it. One of the lessons that he was taught by his affliction was, to see that all this world is a vain thing, and this we seldom believe till we are convinced by very sharp methods. Oh! what a change will death make in our thoughts and our affections? How different is that world into which it carries us, from this wherein we now are; and those that are dead shall not see men any more with the inhabitants of the earth: but oh! what a sight will there be in the morning of the resurrection! Men will not rise from their beds of dust to buy and sell, to plant and sow, as they now do, but they must rise to judgment, and thence to joy or torment everlasting.

8. Often think that sickness is not the fittest season wherein to prepare for death. Oh! what terrors, and fears, and pains, do then ruin all our sprightliness and activity, and unavoidably put our souls into great hurry and confusion; and then the remembrance of our

sins and abused health does greatly weigh us down. Alas! the most in sickness can only complain, sigh, and groan.

9. Use your bodies as remembering they will shortly be sick and die. Beware of all pride and vanity, considering what a sorry thing the body is when the soul is gone; beware that your sins do not lie down with you in the grave, for if they do so, they will rise again with you.

To conclude this use, you that are old, have cause to be thankful that you have had so long a time wherein to prepare for the coming of the Lord; and you that have recovered from long and painful sickness, have cause to be thankful that your sun is risen again, that you have recovered strength, and are yet praising God when others are in the state of silence.

Motives to urge you to be ready for Christ's coming.

Cons. I. How many awakening providences you in London have had. God has called you by plague and fire, by his loud and roaring judgments, and by the late earthquake we have all been awakened, or, at least, have had cause to be so, from the many designs of our enemies. How many warnings have we had from our own pains, and from the miseries of others. The persecutions which other countries are under, their wars, their desolations, and their troubles, loudly call us to repent, lest our Lord visit us in the same dreadful manner; and besides, more particularly, how many acquaintance and friends of yours have been called away to judgment; their death is a messenger to bid you prepare to die, for your time will shortly come. I have often wondered that when so many die every week, we are so little affected; but the throngs of this city, the hurry of business, and

the sight of the multitudes that crowd our streets and assemblies, takes away from us the remembrance of those that are departed; for though one generation passes, yet still another comes; and though the same people do not fill the world always, yet there are abundance of people in it still. Our slumbers are very deep and strong, if the many warnings of God will not cause us to prepare for our Lord's coming. What patience and forbearance has been exercised to you and me! How long were we spared when we were unfruitful! We might have been seized in our sin. Therefore, let us improve the deaths of other young men. We naturally flatter ourselves with the hope of long life, but we see that we may die sometimes, whilst our strength is firm, and in our greenest youth. How many are now in their long eternity that were not so old as we. To you, the relations of Mr. Hill, it is an awakening providence, that in less than a year's space, two have died out of your family; prepare to follow your dear friends and brothers, and bless God that those arrows that were shot on the right hand and on the left have missed you. You must be, and are sensible of two such strokes as you have had, and of the loss of two such brothers, so young, so serious, and so hopeful; but yet, as you must not be insensible, you must not be excessive in your grief, for all your tears will not make the lovely plants to grow again; they are cut down and withered—withered in our soil, but we hope they are transplanted to a better state, and they are taken from very many dismal storms, that we may live to see.

2. The having your lamps trimmed will make you desirous to see the Lord, whereas the slothful and unprepared will dread his coming;

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you will be of the number of those happy souls that would fain see him come; you will say, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. You will long for his appearance, as those that earnestly desire to see the morning after a tedious night of pain; you will long to be more like him, and to see his name exalted, and his now-despised church in all her shining glory; you will long to see him whom you have loved, and to join with all his wondering saints and angels in his praises. Your prayers for his appearance will be more fervent, and your hopes more lively. You will say to this world, (as a devout person expresses it,) away, you trifling vanities; why do you bewitch our eyes, and enchant our ears, and draw aside our thoughts with your flattering enticements? trouble us no more, you false and unsatisfying glories; leave our minds free to think of the great and solemn day, when you must all be benighted, not by the want, but by an excess of light. Awake! awake! and open thine eyes upon us, O thou sweet morning of our happiness! Arise! shine forth, O thou Sun of Righteousness, and make us blessed with a sight of thy glory!

3. And lastly, if you are thus prepared, you will, at length, have a great honour and reward, which is fully expressed in Luke xii. 4. What an honour will it be to be so magnificently waited on. I remember it is said of an old man that died by a wound he received in battle, being exhorted to die like a Christian, and with the same courage that he had showed in his life, said, A man who had lived well fourscore years, cannot be to seek to die well for a quarter of an hour; the example that he gave of dying well was more valuable than that which he gave in so many battles of

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courageous fighting. This was Montmorency, Constable of France. To you that are prepared, death will be the period of your miseries and the gate of heaven. To conclude this subject, you that are old have cause to have your lamps burning, for you, according to the course of nature, are very near to judgment. Death, with its many foregoing pains, has already knocked at your doors. Your sun, that has shined a long time, is now going down. Your evening is already come, and you had need to hasten your preparation, lest the night come wherein you cannot work. You have many long years and a great deal of mercy to answer for; and as to you that are young, for aught you know, your sun may go down at noon; in the first watch you may be called away. Begin betimes to be religious and to think of death; you will hereafter have sorrow for all your vain pleasures. But of your most early seriousness and holiness you will never have cause to repent.

The conclusion of the whole.

As to us all, let us, by every loss of a friend, be made better; and by his dying learn to be more prepared for our own death. Let us seriously view the miseries of life, and we shall not so much doat upon it. Let us behold what darkness is in the shadow of death, i.e. in all the pains that go before it. Let us but consider what long miseries and grievous sickness most people undergo before they die, and we shall see what a bitter thing sin is, the first sin, that has placed so many thorns and briars in our flesh. Our departed friend had a long sickness, and would often say, it is a hard work to die; and so it is: death is the last enemy, and very formidable. A great and long trial had our friend, but he had patience answerable to it.

God afflicted him with one hand, and supported him with the other. In his health he governed his passions, which Solomon says is more noble than to take a city; and in his sickness his meekness and submission made him willing to drink the cup that God had given him; and if any thing is to be envied, it is the patience of a hopeful young man, that is like to be taken away in the midst of his days, when he is just entering on the world, or a new condition of life. Oh! how glorious is it to look with an eye of indifference on all that is present, and to leave it all without a sigh. This is owing to the mighty grace of God, to which nothing is impossible. Our friend was willing to die, and did not hanker after long life, which he saw to be surrounded with so many storms, and covered with so many snares. He was sometimes assaulted by the devil, but by faith he overcame, and was never without support and hope that revived his soul. Sometime he was heard to say, Lord, though I have often rejected the offers of thy mercy, yet I pray thee, in the sincerity of my heart, not to reject me; and to pray, Lord, bring me, at length, to the heavenly Jerusalem, which thou knowest I have longed for; and there we hope he now is, where there is no sin nor sorrow. He often acknowledged what a mercy it was that he had an affliction so moderate and so beneficial as to bring him to a contempt of this world, and a greater love to God, saying, often, God had humbled his soul. He was afraid of the pangs of death, by reason of the restless pains that he had for a night or two before he died, but God was better to him than his fears, for having been composed to rest for two hours, he died in his sleep, and I hope I may say

he slept in Jesus. Oh, comfortable death! oh, pleasant gale! to waft a poor voyager home after so many storms! Now what remains, but that you who were the acquaintance of the deceased Mr. Hill, do think of his death, and not forget to make ready for your own. You

hope to live to old age, and it may be delay to think of your souls for that reason, but if you should die young, what will your case then be? Oh, consider that the blood that now runs so briskly in your veins may quickly be frozen by the cold of death.

AN ESSAY ON MORAL EXCELLENCE.*

"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.

To examine moral questions, to ascertain their nature, to adjust their claims, and to trace their consequences, is the prerogative of man, and perhaps one of the noblest exercises of a rational and accountable mind.

The subject which it is proposed in the present paper briefly to discuss, is one which has occupied the attention and divided the opinions of the thoughtful and philosophic in every age, and has done more to establish the imperfection of human powers and the need of a divine revelation, than almost any inquiry besides. From the earliest days of metaphysical investigations, and the first attempts to establish a consistent system of mental philosophy, down to the present time, it has stood in many respects alone, unattempted by some, but just approached by others, confused by more, and satisfactorily illustrated and explained by none. This, of course, applies to all those writers of ancient or modern times, who could not, or did not, avail themselves of the light of inspired truth to guide their inquiries or influ-

ence their decisions, and it is both curious and instructive to observe what a variety of opinions, opposed to, and frequently contradictory of each other, were entertained and promulgated by them. Time and space will not permit us distinctly to specify or to enlarge on these, but a brief glance at them may be allowed, while a little reflection upon them will be sufficient to prove the obscurity of all the light which reason could pour on the science of morals, the dubious character of her deductions, and the absolute need of some paramount and certain authority by which to be conducted in this momentous affair.

The acute metaphysician, Dr. Samuel Clarke, tells us, that "the propriety and fitness of things" is to be accounted the *norma vivendi*, the rule of life and actions, the standard of moral excellence, by which all pretensions to it are to be examined and adjudged. It is easy to perceive how very imperfect and insufficient such a criterion would be, and how unfit also, to answer its designed end. For if the "propriety and fitness" of things

* The leading thought of our Correspondent's Essay, (and he should have said this) seems to be that which pervades Dr. Wardlaw's "*Lectures on Christian Ethics*," which we hope soon to introduce to the attention of our readers.—EDS.

is to be the test of human character and conduct, of this who is to be the judge? what some would place in one thing, others would place in another. So that it supplies no criterion, no general, no universal rule. And yet it is amusing to observe (were it not of so serious a nature) how general and how powerful was the influence this system once exerted over a large portion of the world. The schools of philosophy were mostly imbued with it.

Epicurus, who stood at the head of a large fraternity in his day, and it is to be feared of no small one in ours, introduced and promulgated a system as confusing and confounded as that by which he attempted to account for the existence and continuance of the material world, and unhappily with much greater success. He laid it down as a maxim, that mere "prudence," by which he meant a consideration of self-interest, and a regard to present pleasure or gratification, was to be the motive of human conduct, and the foundation of human virtue; thus making every man's will his law, or rather his feelings at the moment, whatever they might dictate, or to whatever they might lead, so as it was compatible with self-indulgence and self-gratification. Whatever, therefore, was most agreeable to a mind, however constituted and however depraved, was virtuous, and in this the obligation, the test, and the rewards of morality consisted. Wretched and abominable system! How degrading and unworthy! How did it for a while, and to a fearful extent, scathe and wither all the plants of virtue in our world, and make man tenfold more the child of hell than before. It was impossible where this existed that morality could live. Like some pesti-

lential blast, it blew over a portion of the heathen world, and left nothing precious behind.

It was much more natural, or rather rational, and in some degree honourable to the dictates of human reason, to place it, as some well-known writers among the moderns have done, in what they termed "disinterested and universal benevolence." But what by these terms the advocates of this system meant to convey, it is difficult for us to define, nor have they very clearly described. That benevolence is good, and disinterested benevolence, (if such an epithet be needed,) is still better, none can doubt. But how it should become a standard and rule of morals, perceived by all, felt by all, especially considering man's fallen and depraved condition, it is not very easy to determine. Besides which, there are many questions in morals which would not be approached, or affected, by its decisions.

Another, and both a very natural and commendable theory of morals, as far as it goes, was that which obtained under the name of the "moral sense," or feeling of approveableness inherent in man, and which it was assumed was given him to be the criterion and guide of his conduct in the present state. That this, by whatever name it was called, amounted to nothing more or less than what we understand by the term "conscience," must be, we think, apparent to all, and as such, therefore, we shall regard it. Its excellence, its power, its utility, and its authority, to a certain extent, we are not disposed to deny, nor to question that it was given by the adorable Creator for the purposes above named. All that is requisite respecting it is to prove that it is perfect, uncorrupted, unimpaired by the fall, and precisely now what it was when it

came from our Maker's hands. Otherwise, and of this mournful fact we have no doubt, it may lead us astray, and beneath a veil of darkness, or the power of prejudice, or the predominant influence of self-love, it may arrive at conclusions perfectly incorrect, and as much opposed to genuine morality as to our own happiness and to that of others. An instance of this occurs in the case of Saul of Tarsus, previous to his conversion; and to prove the insufficiency of conscience in its present state, without the light of divine revelation, we need only refer to the record contained in certain portions of the Epistle to the Romans.

The last alleged rule for human conduct of which we need here take any notice, and the futility of which will probably be seen as soon as named, is that of "expediency," partially adopted in ancient times, but more formally and seriously avowed by some in modern. But how unfit it is to become the standard of morality or the test of our actions, in whole or in part, is quite manifest, and must soon appear to every serious and reflecting mind. A more unsafe and uncertain ground of moral obligation assuredly could not well be named. In itself variable and incomplete, it depends also upon numerous adventitious circumstances, but few of which can possibly be known, and those few ignorance may partially or entirely conceal. So that it transfers the ground of obligation at once to individual opinion at the time, making it sole criterion and judge. But how weak, how partial, and how incorrect this may be, the errors of mankind may be adduced to prove. It is this that has led multitudes astray. Expediency, it may fairly be affirmed, has slain

its thousands, and ruined its ten thousands: and though in things indifferent it may sometimes be permitted to dictate and decide, yet sorry is the state of that individual, or that nation, or that community, which takes, in regard to the higher questions of morals, expediency for its guide.

We have now adverted to some of the various theories which have been advanced for the guidance of man during the period of his continuance in this probationary state. With more or less confidence have they been put forth, and severally obtained admirers and advocates in different portions and ages of the world, chiefly when and where the light of Christianity was unknown. Were it needful for us to attempt to establish their unsuitableness and insufficiency more fully than already has been done, we might fearlessly refer to their respective character and peculiarities, and their actual influence over their abettors, and on that part of mankind amongst whom for a while they obtained. Is it possible that any one of these, or all together, should contain elements sufficiently strong to excite, to regulate, to restrain human conduct, and raise it to that elevation to which alone the sacred name of morality belongs? Is it possible that from any one of these, or all combined, sufficient *motives* can be furnished to encourage virtue, to hinder vice, and to operate on man in all the diversified circumstances and situations in which, in the present life, he may be found? What has been the fact? what has been their actual result upon mankind? Let the tree be judged by its fruits, and then will it be seen that none of these theories, however high the authority that enjoined them, and in whatever approbation they

may have been held, were sufficient to secure the accomplishment of their proposed ends. They were but as glimmering lights, which only served to render the surrounding darkness more visible; or but as feeble restraints, which, being soon overcome, left the world to a deluge of vice, profaneness, and immorality. To this all history bears testimony; and were it possible for us to sketch graphically a picture of the most refined and improved amongst the heathen, it would still more abundantly be confirmed.

The question, then, instantly occurs, and is open before us for solution, What is the ground of moral obligation, and what is the true criterion and test of morality? and to this we think no other answer can possibly be returned, than that it is the revealed will of God, the will of the supreme and righteous Governor of the universe, to whose dominion our world belongs, and in whom we live, and move, and have our being. All other systems are evidently deficient, nor is it within the compass of human powers, which have been taxed and tried for this purpose for now many centuries of years, to discover or originate another. All others fail in some essential point—this alone is complete. And whilst all others have been tried and found wanting, this is beginning to benefit and bless the world, and wherever it is introduced, to spread life, order, and morality around. That the “only wise” and infinitely “good” should best know what is good for man, and in what the true elevation and excellence of his character would consist, we might previously infer; and on opening the record which he hath given, we find in it all that is requisite to

make man virtuous, blest, and happy. “He hath shown thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” Unto man he said, “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.” “A good understanding have all they who keep his commands.” “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.” So simple, so full, so complete, are the requirements of the divine law; and in conformity to its ten great commands, the whole duty of man may be said to consist. Presented to us as it now is, and conjoined with the mediatorial work of the Son of God, it is adapted to our condition, clothed in an authority more venerable and sacred than before, and furnished with motives which none but the depraved and the immoral can resist. Whatever is essential to virtue is laid down therein with the clearness of noon-day; whatever is desirable to embellish her lovely form is there described. It is adapted to us in all the diversified circumstances of humanity; and is embodied in one perfect living example which it records. So excellent are its precepts, that they cannot be improved, and therefore cannot change. So pure and holy, that none can but admire. Uniform and immutable, it cannot deceive or lead us astray. Emanating from the highest authority, it admits of no other appeal; and attended with motives to which the heart of man is not accessible, it alone is likely to be effectual. Distinguished by these attributes, and pre-eminent

in these excellencies, it is both adapted to and designed for universality, and though now circumscribed in its influence, it shall one day sway its sceptre over a redeemed and renovated world.

Such is the code of morals which the Scripture contains. The will of God its rule; the example of Christ its model; the authority of God its motive; and the glory of God its end. All moral excellence is evidently and necessarily included in it, and therefore (in man) must consist in a conformity to it. There can be no other standard throughout the intelligent creation. There can be no other in our world. In proportion as that divine law is transcribed in human character, and exemplified in human conduct, are these moral, virtuous, or holy. Man is elevated, dignified, ennobled. The elements which form his character are pure, immutable, and immortal. He is then a being fit for both worlds, this and the future, and destined not merely to occupy both, but after he has adorned and blest the present, to flourish in immortal vigour and undecaying fruitfulness when time is no more. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

To produce this elevation of character and manners, which must flow from the operation of truth and of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul, is the obvious and avowed design of Christianity. Wherever it comes, it is to breathe the breath of life, to exert a transforming power, and to restore man to his original dignity, which consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. Wherever it is received in truth, and in love, these hallowed effects follow, and

beneath its celestial influence, the fruits and the fragrance of sanctity are soon diffused. What the Scriptures call "the beauties of holiness," in our degenerate world, appear, and a morality which reason cannot impugn, which philosophy cannot deny, which the most accomplished minds of earth cannot but admire, and which superior intelligences cannot condemn, is displayed. It consists of all the elements of true greatness and goodness infused into the human character and operative there, and though incipient and imperfect here, destined to maturity and perfection hereafter. It is a plant from a better country; that is, the heavenly, set in an earthly soil, but germinant and productive there, and yielding, like the Tree of Life, of which it is a scion, all manner of precious fruits, grateful alike to God and man. A character thus formed is truly good, excellent, and holy. Conformity to the divine will is its constituent quality and distinguishing feature; and in nothing else but this does moral excellence consist. To be like God, to love what he loves, to hate what he hates, and to do what he requires, are its only terms and properties. Nothing else will it admit; nothing else will it own.

All besides is evanescent—temporary—perishable. And amidst all that is adventitious to or connected with it, of which we have so much in the world at the present day, let it be remembered by us that this alone is pure, substantial, valuable, bearing the impress of heaven's approbation now, and destined to be recognized there hereafter. The rest is chaff, dross, or, at best, but the leaves which, in autumn, fall. Of this alone—of all the elements of human character, and of all the variety of earthly

things, can it be said—It endureth for ever!

And how instructive and how refreshing is it amidst all that is transient, changeful, and mortal in this "present evil world," to perceive something that is permanent, something that shall endure when all things else shall have passed away. There is that upon which the eye of the mind may rest, with complacency, unlike all by which it is surrounded, and destined to survive it all. The fair form of human greatness, and the distinctions of earthly glory; the mighty projects of human ambition, and the deeds of temporal renown; the most durable monuments of mortal grandeur, and the most substantial and lasting of the works of man, shall all pass away, and "like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind." The place that knew them once will know them no more. Inquirers may ask, where are they? and no reply shall be given. They were, but they are not. Like the grass of the field, or the flitting cloud of a summer's morning, they have withered or passed away, and no vestige of them remains. But moral excellence shall endure, like its Divine Author and Pattern, the "same to-day and for ever."

There is much in the possession of man, or in connection with him, which we are accustomed to hold in high estimation, perhaps to emulate, almost to covet to enjoy. Who does not admire the stately form of human beauty, animated by the vigour of health, the freshness of youth, the power of manhood, or even when it becomes venerable from the marks and honours of hoary age? Who, that has a mind to perceive, and a heart to feel, but must be impressed with the mighty

energies of human genius, when developed in favourable circumstances, and directed to laudable pursuits; it pours the light of science on its own and successive generations, and enables thousands to explore the earth, or search the treasures of the sea, or controul the operations of air, or travel and make observations among the stars? Who but must be enraptured with the beauties of the canvass, the expression of the silent marble, or the melodies of sound, when touched by the artist's magic wand, or produced by the musician's skill? Who has not witnessed with wonder the vast accumulations of human wealth,—the achievements of commercial enterprize,—the ingenious devices of earthly luxury,—and the soaring heights to which some have attained of worldly fame? But has it not often struck us that there is nothing in all these that is durable, nothing immortal, nothing that will survive the dissolution of our nature, and the ravages of the tomb, or at furthest, the consummation of all things? The fascinations of beauty, the powers of genius, the productions of art, the discoveries of science, are all temporary and evanescent, limited to the present world, and trampled upon by the great Destroyer, in the war with whom there is no discharge. He consigns them all to the silence and darkness of the grave, and there in one undistinguished mass their possessors, and those who were destitute of them, lie. Their boundary is the narrow space of life. Their goal the house appointed for all the living. Of all that is mortal, all that is earthly, all that is enviable in affluence, pleasure, or fame, this is the end. But he "that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

This, then, is the high distinction

and crowning glory of all moral excellence and worth, that it is undecaying and imperishable. Above all the things of time and earth, it rises with this superior eminence and exclusive destiny, that it shall survive them all, and subsist in purity and power in another and a better world. There is a state of being approaching in which it shall find a more congenial soil, and a more favourable atmosphere, and more fostering influences than at present; and there shall it unfold and perpetuate itself, when time and earth are no more. Of that bright and celestial world, moral excellence will be the distinguishing feature, element, and glory. In its essence, and various manifestations, for which it will find ever widening scope and opportunity, it will be improved, elevated, and enlarged. The fit character of heaven is that which holiness forms, and by it are all its blissful inhabitants distinguished and adorned. God is holy; angels are holy; and all the saved from among men, whom redeeming love has brought thither, are beautified with and now perfected in holiness also. On this all the employments of heaven bear, and have a tendency to promote it, whilst by it they are all prosecuted and sustained. Without it none could be fit to engage, or to feel an interest in them, as it is this alone which qualifies intelligent beings to stand and wait in the temple above, or to be occupied in active service for God and the Lamb. With this alone will the society of that better country be desired, or its fellowship enjoyed, for hence flows all capacity to associate with, and to relish the communion of, those who are destined for ever to dwell in the "city of the great King," and reflect the glories of his moral character there. Heaven is the holy

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of holies of the universe, and into it, from no part of the Creation, can any thing enter which is defiled, or that loveth or maketh a lie. On its gates, walls, foundation, and spacious temple, holiness to Jehovah may be seen inscribed, and only that consecration to Him which corresponds to it can be admitted or tolerated there. All else would be strange, intrusive, foreign, and soon frowned away, or must be wretched could it remain. For from this one ingredient of moral excellence all the happiness of heaven will flow, partly from itself, and partly from the capacity it gives for the fruition and immediate presence of God and the Lamb. Holiness and happiness in their own nature identical, or at least so united that they can never be severed asunder, are destined to be inseparable companions, and to minister to each other's plenitude and vigour, throughout the interminable ages of an immortal existence.

There is one other and equally impressive and attractive view of the subject of this paper, in reference to its future perfection and perpetuity, and out of which, perhaps, both these may be considered to arise, which we must notice before we conclude, and that is, that it will constitute the sole object of Divine complacency in all intelligent beings who then shall form the secure and happy family of the living God. From whatever part of the universe they come, and in whichever of the many mansions of the Father's house their destined residence may be, on them all will He look down with ineffable delight, because possessed of his own nature, and reflecting the brightness of his own image. There is nothing else, that we are informed of, throughout all his dominions, that "the King immortal, eternal,

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and invisible," views with such cordial interest and welcome as this. Even here "the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him," and rejoices even "with singing" over the result of his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus. But when in that future and glorious world, the virtues of his children shall all be matured, and moral excellence in its perfection and brightest splendour adorn them all, how will he triumph in the achievements of his own mercy and wisdom, and power and love. From the throne of their conjoined holiness and glory will the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost look down with infinite, and

to us, inconceivable complacency on such a scene, and each person of the wondrous Godhead admire and approve the display of moral excellence it contains. The result of their own works, and the resemblance of their own character, the divine perfections will be thrown back in reflected lustre on the source from which they came, and the whole will yield a tribute of everlasting praise to the triune Jehovah. Whilst throughout eternal ages, angels and redeemed men shall present one vast assemblage of moral excellence, the confluence of virtue from the whole universe, advancing, and brightening, and augmenting in glory for evermore.

M. C.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JASHER.

AN individual, professing himself to be a clergyman, has called upon many respectable individuals of different denominations, in town and country, to solicit their subscription to an edition of the *Book of Jasher*, which he states has been recently discovered, and is highly interesting and important to biblical students. Mr. Prebendary Horne, to whom the Christian public are already deeply indebted for his valuable "Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures," having had this literary forgery brought under his notice, felt himself called upon to examine into its history, and has collected the following "Bibliographical Notes" upon the subject. They will form part of a new edition of his great work, which he is preparing for publication; but as the extensive circulation of this pseudo-jewish book may do much mischief, he has kindly permitted us to insert the article in our pages, in the hope that error may be restrained and imposture detected.

EDITORS.

No. I. The Book of Jasher. With Testimonies and Notes explanatory of the text.
To which is prefixed Various Readings.

Translated into English from the Hebrew, by Alcuin, of Britain, who went a Pilgrimage into the Holy Land.

No. II. The Book of Jasher: With Testimonies and Notes, Critical and Historical, explanatory of the Text. To which is prefixed Various Readings, and a Preliminary Dissertation, proving the Authenticity of the Work.

Translated into English from the Hebrew, by Flaccus Albinus Alcuinus of Britain. Who went a Pilgrimage into the Holy Land, and Persia, where he discovered this volume in the city of Gazna.

This Book is twice mentioned in Holy Scripture, viz. in Josh. x. 13, and in 2 Sam. i. 18; in both which Places it is appealed to as a Work of Credit and Reputation, and as such was at that Time had in great Esteem.

Printed in the Year MDCCLL.
4to.

"Is not this written in the Book of Jasher?"
Joshua x. 13.

"Behold it is written in the Book of Jasher?"
2 Sam. i. 18.

Bristol; Printed for the Editor, by Philip
Rose, 20, Broadmead. MDCCLXXIX.
4to.

Of the literary forgery contained in the volume or rather pamphlet, printed in the year 1751, (No. 1.) the following account is given by Mr. Rowe-Mores, a diligent topographer and antiquary of the eighteenth century, in his "Dissertation upon English Typographical Founders and Foundaries," published in 1778. "In the year 1751, Mr. Ilive published a pretended translation of the "Book of Jasher, said to have been made by one Alcuin of Britain. The account given of the translation is full of glaring absurdities; but of the publication, this we can say from the information of the Only-One, who is capable of informing us, because the business was a secret between the Two: Mr. Ilive in the night-time had constantly an Hebrew Bible before him (*sed qu. de hoc*), and cases in his closet. He produced the copy of Jasher, and it was composed in private, and the forms worked off in the night-time in a private press-room by these two, after the men of the printing-house had left their work."—p. 65.

Jacob Ilive, the person here mentioned, was a type-founder and printer, who carried on business in London between the years 1730 and 1763, in which last year he died. "Being not perfectly sound in his mind, he produced some strange works. In 1733, he published an Oration, intended to prove the plurality of worlds, and asserting that this earth is hell, that the souls of men are apostate angels, and that the fire to punish those confined to this world at the day of judgment will be immaterial. . . . In this strange performance the author unveils his Deistical principles, and takes no small liberty with the sacred Scriptures, and especially with the character of Moses. Emboldened by this first adventure, he determined to become the public teacher of infidelity. For this purpose he hired the use of Carpenters' Hall, where for some time he delivered his orations, which consisted chiefly of scraps from Tindal and other similar writers." (Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, vol. xix. p. 228.)

In November 1751 he published "The Book of Jasher" of which the following account was given in the Monthly Review for December in the same year (vol. v. p. 250.): "The publisher, in order to give a sanction to this pretended Book of Jasher, refers to the mention made to such a book in Joshua x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18. In both which places, says he, it is appealed to as a work of credit and reputation, and as such was at that time had in great esteem. But the work now published does not in the least appear to be that book referred to in the Scriptures; but a palpable piece of contrivance intended to impose on the credulous and the ignorant, to sap the credit of the books of Moses, and to blacken the character of Moses himself. Hence it is no wonder that the editor or author has had the precaution to conceal his name. He has trumped up an idle story of the means, by which the MS. fell into his hands, which he relates in a prefatory epistle to a nameless earl. He has also prefixed a history of Alcuin's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, of the manner of his procuring a sight of the Book of Jasher, and the means by which he obtained permission to translate it into English. But the whole is so full of blunders, inconsistencies, and absurdities, that we think it beneath any further notice."

With this quotation from the Monthly Review, in addition to the contemporary evidence above given, the author would have dismissed the pretended Book of Jasher, had it not come to his knowledge that very many individuals have been induced to purchase the reprint of this forgery, executed at Bristol

in 1829,* (No. II.) of which an account is given in pages 8—10, *infra*, under the idea of its being the genuine long-lost Book of Jasher. In the hope of preventing future unwary purchasers from being similarly misled, he now subjoins a few specimens of the falsehoods, anachronisms, and contradictions of the Holy Scriptures, which characterise this nocturnal production of the non-sane infidel author, Jacob Ilive.

1. The assertion in the title page that Alcuin of Britain "went a pilgrimage into the Holy Land" is *contrary to historical fact*. Alcuin neither visited the Holy Land nor travelled into Persia. He was born in Yorkshire about the middle of the eighth century, and was educated at York, where probably he embraced the monastic profession. It is not known what preferments he held before he left England; though some accounts state that he was a deacon of the church at York, and others, that he was abbot of Canterbury. His early years were *wholly* spent in England; and having been sent on an embassy from Offa king of Mercia to the emperor Charlemagne (who formed so high an opinion of his acquirements and character as to become his pupil), he was induced, by the emperor's entreaties, to settle in France. In that country, accordingly, with the exception of one short visit to England, he spent the remainder (*the chief part*) of his life, having rendered essential services to the cause of religion and learning, and there he died, A. D. 804, in the abbey of Saint Martin at Tours, *without ever quitting Europe*. (Cave, *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*, pp. 420, 421. Colonæ, 1720. Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary*, article Alcuin.)
2. All the genuine writings of Alcuin are printed in Latin, as well as some doubtful and spurious pieces which have been ascribed to him.† If he had composed any treatise in any other language, it would doubtless have been written in the then vernacular language of England, that is, the Anglo-Saxon; fragments of which language have come down to our time in some portions of the Anglo-Saxon version of the Scriptures, executed in the eighth century. Whereas *the whole of this pretended Book of Jasher is in MODERN ENGLISH*, and not a few passages of it are verbatim the same as our present authorized English version of the Bible, which was first published in 1611, *only eight hundred and seven years after Alcuin's death*; and what is not copied from our English Bible, is a lame and studied imitation of its style and diction, both to conceal the fraud and to allure readers.
3. In the translator's preface" (p. iv.) Alcuin is made to say,—“I took unto me two companions, who learned with me in the University of Oxford all those languages which the people of the East speak.” But the University of Oxford, according to the earliest date which has been stated by its historians, was not founded by king Alfred before the year 886, that is to say, *only eighty-two years AFTER Alcuin's decease!*
4. “The Words of Alcuin, which are read before the Book of Jasher,” are further convicted of falsehood by the anachronisms they contain.
 - [i.] In p. v. mention is made of “*the paper on which it is wrote*” only three hundred years before the art of making cotton-paper was introduced into Europe (the use of which did not become general until the thirteenth

* In a prospectus for a second edition of the reprint above alluded to, which was circulated in London in 1833, it is stated that “the first edition has been honoured with the autographs of NEARLY ONE THOUSAND of the most literary characters as subscribers; among whom are many PRELATES and other DIGNITARIES, as well as *most of the public Establishments of the country.*”

† The best and most complete collection of Alcuin's works was published at Ratisbon, in 1777, in two large volumes, folio; it was edited by M. Frobenius (or Froben), abbot of Saint Emmeran, near that city, who has carefully distinguished the doubtful and spurious pieces from Alcuin's genuine writings, all of which are in Latin. It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to state, that there is not a single word or allusion to the Book of Jasher, as being translated by him.

century), and considerably more than three hundred years before paper made from linen rags was in use.

- [ii.] In p. vi. he mentions *stationers* upwards of four centuries before book-selling was known. Stationers were not heard of, in Europe, before the middle of the thirteenth century. (Ducange, *Glossarium*, voce *Stationarii*, vol. vi. col. 716.) And the Company of Stationers, who were the first booksellers in London, was not incorporated until May, 1557, in the third and fourth year of the reign of Philip and Mary; that is, *only seven hundred and fifty-three years AFTER Alcuin's death.*

5. The book itself is replete with falsehoods, and with contradictions of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua.

(The restricted limits necessarily allotted to this article compel us to omit the examples Mr. Horne supplies.)

Ilive's forgery was published in 1751 for *two shillings and sixpence*. For the publication (No. II.) printed at Bristol in 1829, the modest charge of TEN SHILLINGS was originally made, which was subsequently increased to one pound sterling. Of this publication the author is now to give some account.

Though published *apparently* for the first time in 1829, there is every reason for concluding that this is an acknowledged reprint of Ilive's forgery, with some unimportant variations (which will be pointed out in the course of the present article), and for the following reasons:—

1. The TITLE PAGE, with the exception of the few sentences printed in italics in p. 5. is the same as in Ilive's forgery. The two titles are there printed in columns, in order that the reader may the more readily compare them: he will observe that the editor of the Bristol publication in 1829 expressly says that the pseudo-book of Jasher is "Translated into ENGLISH from the 'Hebrew.'" In his proposals for a new edition already alluded to, this is altered into—"Translated into ANGLO-SAXON from the Hebrew!" Query, by whom was this pretended Anglo-Saxon version translated into modern English?
2. The "ADVERTISEMENT," if not colourably altered, is evidently taken from Ilive's preliminary letter to a nameless earl; as will be evident to any one who compares the following extracts.

NO. I. THE BOOK OF JASHER. 1751.

NO. II. THE BOOK OF JASHER. 1829.

"To the Right Honourable the Earl
"of * * * * *

"My Lord, The following translation of
"the Book of Jasher fell into my hands
"thirty years ago" [that is, in 1721] "by
"meer accident. I was travelling in the
"North of England, to see the country."
"Ilive then proceeds to give a false account of his purchasing the manuscript at an auction of "the goods and books of an
"old gentleman lately deceased, who
"was upwards of one hundred years of
"age."

"Among the papers" (Ilive continues),
"my Lord, I found the following translation of the Book of Jasher, which I last
"summer, communicated to your Lordship
"of a new translation of the Bible. I
"own that till then it lay by me quite unregarded.

The following translation of "The Book
"of Jasher" was discovered by a gentleman
in a Journey through the North of England in 1721.

"It lay by him for several years, until,
"in 1750, there was a rumour of a new
"translation of the Bible, when he laid it
"before a noble Earl. On perusal he highly

"Your Lordship upon perusal was pleased
 "to approve of it, and to advise its publication
 "as a WORK OF GREAT SINCERITY,
 "PLAINNESS, AND TRUTH. Your Lord-
 "ship's remark I must not omit. That it
 "was your opinion the Book of Jasher
 "ought to have been printed in the Bible
 "before that of Joshua."

"approved of it, AS A WORK OF GREAT
 "SINCERITY, PLAINNESS, AND TRUTH.
 "His Lordship's opinion was that it should
 "have been placed in the Bible before the
 "Book of Joshua."

He further adds:—

"BY A WRITING ON THE OUTSIDE OF
 "THE MANUSCRIPT IT SHOULD SEEM,
 "THAT THIS TRANSLATION WAS LAID BE-
 "FORE OUR FIRST REFORMERS, BECAUSE
 "IT SAYS: 'I HAVE READ THE BOOK OF
 "JASHER TWICE OVER, AND I MUCH
 "APPROVE OF IT, AS A PIECE OF GREAT
 "ANTIQUITY AND CURIOSITY, BUT I
 "CANNOT ASSESS THAT IT SHOULD BE
 "MADE A PART OF THE CANON OF
 "SCRIPTURE."

"Signed WICKLIFF."

"BY A WRITING ON THE OUTSIDE OF
 "THE MANUSCRIPT, IT SHOULD SEEM,
 "THAT THIS TRANSLATION WAS LAID BE-
 "FORE OUR FIRST REFORMERS, BECAUSE
 "IT SAYS: 'I HAVE READ THE BOOK OF
 "JASHER TWICE OVER, AND I MUCH
 "APPROVE OF IT, AS A PIECE OF GREAT
 "ANTIQUITY AND CURIOSITY, BUT I
 "CANNOT ASSESS, THAT IT SHOULD BE
 "MADE A PART OF THE CANON OF
 "SCRIPTURE."

"Signed 'WICKLIFF.'"

"I am your Lordship's most humble and
 "obedient Servant the Editor."

The Editor of 1829 proceeds to state, that "Since 1751" [the reader will bear in mind that this is the identical date of Ilive's forgery] "the manuscript* has been preserved with great care by a gentleman, who lived to a very advanced age, and died some time since. On the event of his death, a friend to whom he had presented it gave it to the present editor, who, conceiving that so valuable a piece of antiquity should not be lost to men of literature and biblical students, has committed it to the press, not doubting but that the attention of the learned will be attracted to so singular a volume." The editor of 1829 further adds, that "he cannot assert any thing from his own knowledge beyond Alcuin's account, but that carries with it such an air of probability and truth, that he does not doubt its authenticity."—"Nothing" (he affirms in his "Preliminary Dissertation on the Antiquity and Authenticity of the Book of Jasher") "can be produced to invalidate this authentic statement, and consequently it merits our credence." (p. v.) Again, "As a book of record, it appears to have truth without mixture of error for its peculiar object and design." (p. vi.) And in the concluding paragraph of his "*Testimonials and Notes concerning the Book of Jasher*" (p. 9. col. 2.) he expresses himself in the following terms: "Thus, then, it appears, that as far as such a work can be authenticated, this possesses every proof of being a transcript of the original manuscript; and, consequently, that it is worthy to be preserved as a collateral evidence of the facts detailed more fully in the writings of Moses, the Book of Joshua, and the Book of Judges." A reference to the positive historical evidence of Mr. Rowe-Mores, above given, and also to the internal evidence furnished by the anachronisms, falsehoods, and contradictions, in Ilive's forgery (see pp. 6-8.), all which are to be found verbatim, literatim, et punctuatim in the edition of 1829, must convince the reader that this publication is neither "authentic" nor does it merit any "credence" whatever;

* In the prospectus of 1833 above referred to, for "manuscript" the word "copy" is substituted,—a general term, which is equally applicable to printed matter as to manuscript. The Editor of the Bristol reprint never exhibited his pretended manuscript to the critical examination of the learned.

and that, with the exception of such passages as are copied from our authorised translation of the Bible, it is a worthless tissue of "error" and falsehood without the slightest "mixture of" "truth." In the Dublin Christian Examiner, or Church of Ireland Magazine, for June, 1831, vol. xi. pp. 426—429.) there is an able exposure of this edition of 1829, containing five or six instances of falsehoods and contradictions, different from those above given in pp. 7, 8., to which we refer the reader who may be desirous of further evidence.

"Some account of this volume" (says the editor of 1829) "may be found in 'Alcuin's works, published in one volume, fol. in the year 1600, in Paris. Now, what is the fact? The first edition of Alcuin's collected works was published at Paris by André Duchene (Andreas Quercetanus) only *seventeen years AFTER the date assigned by the Bristol Editor*, viz, in 1617, in three parts, forming one volume folio; and in this collection of Alcuin's works NO BOOK OF JASHER IS TO BE FOUND. As Duchene's editio princeps is not of very common occurrence, the reader, who may be desirous of seeing a list of the pieces actually written by Alcuin, is referred to Dupin's *Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclesiastiques*, tom. vi. pp. 120—123. 4to. 1692, and to Dr. Cave's *Historia Literaria*, pp. 420, 421.; each of whom has given a catalogue of Alcuin's works from Duchene's edition, and they are both totally silent concerning the pretended Book of Jasher.

3. Although the concluding paragraph of "the Translator's Preface" in the edition of 1751 is omitted in the reprint of 1829, the editor of the latter must have been acquainted with it, as the subjoined verbal coincidences are too minute and specific to be merely accidental.

(No. I.) ILIVE'S BOOK OF JASHER,
1751. (p. vi.)

(No. II.) BOOK OF JASHER. 1829.
(p. v.)

"Some years after my arrival I related this adventure to several, and showed them the work, who advised me not to suffer a copy of it to fall into the hands of the stationers, (*) lest I should incur the displeasure of the purple. Being now GROWN OLD and infirm I have LEFT IT among OTHER papers TO A CLERGYMAN IN YORKSHIRE."

"It appears he" [Jasher] "never made it public, beyond the circle of his friends, and when GROWN OLD he LEFT IT, with his OTHER manuscripts, TO A friend, a PRIEST IN YORKSHIRE."

4. The "Various Readings" which follow "the words of Alcuin," are *verbatim* the same in both publications, except that, in the Bristol edition of 1829, "desart"—the supposed various reading in chap. xii. 18.—is printed desert.

5. The pseudo-book of Jasher itself is next in order; and it COINCIDES with Ilive's fabrication printed in 1751, with most marvellous exactness, both as to certain GRAMMATICAL BLUNDERS, and also as to the MATTER which the two publications severally contain.

[i.] GRAMMATICAL BLUNDERS.

In the title-pages of both publications we have, "To which IS prefixed Various Readings," for are prefixed. Compare page 5. *supra*.

In Jasher, chap. vii. 7. we read, "Thus HATH said our fathers," for have said; xiv. 11. "Thou judgeth the people," for thou judgest; xxvii. 15. "Whom thou knoweth not," for knowest not, and in the margin, "Whom thou doth not worship," for dost not; and in xxxvi. 11. "Thou hath spoken," for Thou hast spoken.

[ii.] WITH REGARD TO THE CONTENTS.

The Book of Jasher in Ilive's forgery of 1751, fills exactly sixty pages; in the Bristol edition of 1829 it makes sixty-TWO pages and a HALF, the excess being caused by the addition between brackets of seventeen

* On the anachronism in this word, see the remark 4. [ii.] in page 7. *supra*.

verses from Gen. xxii. 3-20. in ch. iii., and of twenty-eight verses in ch. xi. from Exod. xiv. 23-31. and xv. 1-19. of our authorised version. Except as occasionally effected by these additions, the *same quantity of matter* is comprised in *each column*, the *summaries of chapters*, and the *head lines* or summaries at the top of each page, the pretended *chronology*, *marginal readings*, and *punctuation* are all *PRECISELY THE SAME*, the spelling only of a very few words being modernised, as ether for æther, encrease and increased for increase and increased; and in the "Testimonies and Notes," Phinehas for Phineas.

The following are the only additional material variations between the two publications, which, after a careful collation, the author has been able to detect.

(No. I.) ILIVE'S BOOK OF JASHER.
1751.

- Ch. i. 17. Cain *conceived* and bare Enoch
20. Seth *conceived* and bare Enos
ii. 1. Lamech.....*conceived* and
bare Noah
v. 9. ye
xxiii. 8. doeth
13. nor
xxxv. 28. Debora
xxxvi. 11. thou commandeth

(No. II.) BOOK OF JASHER, 1829.

- Ch. i. 17. Cain *begat* Enoch
20. Seth *begat* Enos.
ii. 1. Lamech *begat* Noah.
v. 9. you.
xxiii. 8. doest.
13. or
xxxv. 28. Deborah
xxxvi. 11. thou commandest.

The variations in the edition of 1829 are such as might be made by any careful compositor, and cannot (we conceive) in any degree affect the identity of the two publications.

6. The "Testimonies and Notes" appended to both publications are for the most part the *same*, and profess to bear the names of Hur, Phinehas, Othniel, Jazer, Jezer, Zadok, and Tobias. On the miraculous passage of the Israelites over the Red Sea, the editor of the Bristol impression of the Book of Jasher has inserted a note, chiefly taken from Dr. Hale's Analysis of Chronology, vindicating that miracle against the sceptical objections of Michaelis. The notes on ch. i. of Ilive's edition in 1751 are omitted; as also are the two concluding notes on ch. xviii., and the whole of those on ch. xix. and following to the end: in which "chapters," says the editor of 1829, "nothing occurs but what fully accords with the statements of Moses." (Testimonies, p. 9.) If, however, the reader will turn back to p. 7. he will find *only FIVE passages which do directly CONTRADICT "the statements of Moses,"* besides four more in pp. 7, 8. which equally contradict the book of Joshua. The result, then, of the preceding examination is, that the pretended Book of Jasher is a gross and shameless LITERARY FORGERY, which has no claim whatever to "credence," and which is utterly destitute of authenticity.

Respecting the Book of Jasher (which name means the "book of the upright" or "righteous men"), mentioned in Josh. x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18, the opinions of the learned are greatly divided. Most probably, it was not the work of an inspired person, but of some common historiographer, who wrote the annals of his own time, which have long since perished, and who might deserve the name of "Jasher" or the "Upright," because what he wrote was generally deemed a true and authentic narrative of all the events and occurrences which had then happened.

There is extant a rabbinical-Hebrew Book of Jasher, printed at Venice in 1625, which is an explanation of the histories comprised in the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua. Bartolucci, in his Bibliotheca Rabbinica, states that it contains some curious but many fabulous things; and particularly, that this book was discovered at the time of the

destruction of the temple at Jerusalem in a certain place, in which an old man was shut up, in whose possession a great number of Hebrew books was found, and among them the Book of Jasher; which was first carried into Spain, and preserved at Seville, whence finally it was taken to Naples, where it was first published. (Vol. iii. p. 934.) Bartolucci also mentions (in p. 868.) a treatise on the Jewish Laws, composed by rabbi Tham, and called *Sepher Jasher*, or the Book of Jasher, which was printed at Cracow in 1617.

ON THE TEST OF ADAM'S OBEDIENCE.

It is an objection which is frequently urged, with a tone of contemptuous ridicule, against the scriptural account of the fall, that it is unworthy of God to suspend the fate of man upon so trivial a matter, as the eating of a fruit which he had prohibited. Before we attempt to expose the fallacy of this objection, it may be proper to observe, that the manner in which it is generally advanced, is totally unbecoming to the nature of the subject. In thinking about a Being so infinitely glorious as God, it ought to be with feelings of the deepest awe; and in speaking concerning transactions in which *he is even supposed to be engaged*, the most reverential terms ought to be employed. An event of so solemn a nature as the apostacy of man; an event which has been productive of evils so numerous and direful; an event, the existence of which, even the sceptic must admit, to whatever source he ascribe its origin, ought surely to banish every feeling of levity, and repress every expression of ridicule. The *objection itself*, however, is no less futile and unreasonable, than the *tone in which it is urged* is unbecoming and irreverent. In reasoning, indeed, with an infidel upon such a topic, the safer course would be, instead of arguing on the accordance of the sacred narrative with reason or rectitude, to direct

his attention to a *previous question*, namely, Is the Bible a revelation from God? for if this point can be satisfactorily established, then it is obvious that the simple inquiry is, What saith the scripture?

But, if we are not mistaken, this objection is not confined to the opponents of Revelation, but is sometimes advanced by those who profess to receive the Bible as the record of Heaven's will; and who, perhaps, would be egregiously offended if we were to call their Christianity in question. With what consistency they can entertain this sentiment, we are at a loss to perceive. In professing to receive the Bible as a revelation from God, we disclaim the idea, that reason is the test of truth in matters of religion, or the guide of religious faith; and, reasoning presumptively, it might have been expected, that many of the discoveries of revelation would transcend the comprehension of reason, else, wherein would have existed the necessity of a revelation at all? It becomes us, then, in all our speculations upon this and similar subjects, to be impressed with a conviction of our mental imbecility, and of our inability to comprehend all the plans and operations of an infinite mind. Over the ways of Deity there hangs, as might have been expected, a veil of mystery which human perspicacity cannot penetrate, and

which shall not be removed until the consummation of the present system, and the expansion of the Christian's faculties in a nobler sphere of existence. Were we, therefore, to allow that the scriptural narrative of man's probation and apostacy appears to us utterly inexplicable, there would be nothing in this concession to shake our faith in a revelation, the divine authority of which rests upon the basis of solid and irrefragable argument.

B whilst we disavow the principle, that the statements of the Bible are to be brought to the bar of human reason, it must still be acknowledged, that there are not a few of the divine dispensations which display, *even to us*, a wisdom and a benignity which ought to elicit our warmest admiration. Such, it appears to us, will be the result of an unbiassed investigation of the original probation of man. We are too prone to judge by the consequences of the event. In these consequences we are deeply, wofully involved; and thus our feelings and prejudices are enlisted in hostile array against the truth. It becomes us, however, to draw our conclusions from the *conditions and circumstances themselves*, and not from the *catastrophe* in which they terminated. Had the results been of an opposite kind, we should never have called in question the rectitude or equity of the transaction, and we ought not to permit our feelings and predilections to bias and disturb our intellectual perceptions.

In order to arrive at proper conclusions upon this subject, it will be necessary for us to follow, not the false and garbled statements of objectors, but the representations of the inspired Penman. These are recorded in the following language: "The Lord God planted a

garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." As our first parents were indebted to God alike for their being and their enjoyments, the right of the Almighty to place them under such a constitution as seemed good to him will not be disputed. That constitution was no less beneficent, than the test employed was simple and wise. It was upon the interdiction of a tree that the fate of the human race was suspended. It was a *positive* and not a *moral* precept that was imposed. Had it been a moral precept it might have recommended itself to a being formed in the divine image, as much by its own *intrinsic* fitness, as by the *authority of the Lawgiver*. To a holy being, the prohibition of an object wrong in its own nature, would have been no trial at all. By making Adam's fate, however, to depend upon an action which was in itself indifferent—an action which owed all its moral character to the divine appointment, God precluded the possibility of his obeying from any other principle than regard to the Divine authority. It was the design of God, in leaving man to the exercise of his free agency, to try his allegiance, and he selected a test in which the possibility of mistake was precluded—a test by which man's loyalty or disloyalty must have been infallibly elicited.

Objections have been urged against the trifling character of the test; but, let it be remembered, that it is characteristic of wisdom, that it does nothing in vain. That it labours to accomplish its purposes by the simplest possible means, may be traced in all the works and dispensations of God; and it seems worthy of Him, who by one law of gravitation, upholds the universe and regulates matter, from its mightiest to its minutest combinations, by this simple, yet magnificent, principle—by the prohibition of the tree of knowledge—to test the character of man.

Benevolence is equally conspicuous in this arrangement. Many seem to argue upon the supposition, that God implanted in man an appetite, for the gratification of which he denied the means. Now had God precluded Adam from all the trees of the garden; had he withheld from him a supply adequate to the cravings of his animal nature, this objection would have been valid. That such, however, was not the fact, the most superficial reader of the sacred history must infallibly perceive. There was an ample abundance for the supply of his wants; there was a rich variety for the gratification of his taste; for, apart from the tree of knowledge, the tree by which man's character was to be unfolded, "there was *every tree* that was pleasant to the eye and good for food." Nothing was withheld that was necessary for his comfort; every thing was granted which would promote his enjoyment. So far, then, from being placed in a situation in which he was powerfully impelled to transgression, Adam was presented with the strongest inducements to obedience. Situated where want was unknown, and where fertility and beauty were universally diffused,

he was daily reminded of the beneficence of his Creator, and of the obligations to grateful obedience which that beneficence imposed. Created in the image of God, he possessed an understanding unbiassed by error, and a will unperturbed by depravity. The object against which he was to guard was ever palpable to his senses, and was defined in a manner which could not be mistaken. Fortified against error upon other subjects, to this one point he ought to have directed an unremitting vigilance. In addition to the obligations under which he was placed to obey the divine injunction, there were motives of the most commanding nature by which it was sanctioned. Immortal life and endless happiness would have been the glorious reward of obedience; while, on the other hand, the penalty by which disobedience was threatened, was of the most fearful nature; and involved, as he was assuredly aware, not his own doom merely, but that of his unborn and unnumbered posterity.

Under a constitution so favourable as that which we have described, who could have anticipated that man would have transgressed? Such, however, was the melancholy fact. His sin, then, was absolute rebellion against God. Whatever aspect rebellion may assume, by whatever instrument it may be called forth, the crime is substantially the same. There is a violation of the same law—contempt of the same authority. But whilst disobedience against God is sinful, under all circumstances, he who disobeys when the temptations are small, is deemed more culpable than he who disobeys when the temptations are great. This is a principle which, upon other subjects, men admit without hesitation: no reason can be assigned

why it should not be admitted here; and the necessary deduction is, that the nature of the temptation, instead of extenuating, aggravates the guilt of man. Had a more valuable object, and a greater good been prohibited; had our first parents disobeyed in order to acquire something that was essential to their well being, or that would have materially augmented their enjoyment, some excuse might have been framed for their conduct, in the magnitude of the temptation, and of the weight which was laid upon their powers of resistance: but, when we consider the happy situation in which they were placed, and the paltry nature of the temptation by which they were assailed, we are compelled to acknowledge the egregious nature of the folly, and the fearful aggravation of their guilt, who could estimate at so small a price the favour of their God; exchange for a momentary indulgence their purity and happiness; and entail upon themselves, and their unborn progeny, a train of numerous and complicated miseries. "In the objection, that it is unworthy of God to suspend such momentous consequences upon that which is of so little value as an apple, there is," as Dr. Chalmers observes, with his usual felicity of illustration, "nothing else than the grossness of materialism. Had Adam, instead of plucking one single apple from the forbidden tree, been armed with the power of a malignant spirit, and spread a wanton havoc over the face of Paradise, and spoiled the garden of its loveliness, and been able to mar and to deform the whole of that terrestrial creation over which God had so recently rejoiced, the punishment he sustained would have looked, to the arithmetical moralists, a more adequate return for

the offence of which he had been guilty. They cannot see how the moral lesson rises in greatness, just in proportion to the humility of the material accompaniments; and how it exercises a sublimer glory around the Godhead; and how, from the transaction, such as it is, the conclusion cometh forth more nakedly, and therefore more impressively, that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lawgiver."

Unbelief evidently distinguished this action. The insinuations of the apostate spirit were admitted, while the declarations of God were discredited. Contrary to all their experience, they indulged a false estimate of the divine character; namely, that God was an enemy to their happiness; and in thus giving credence to "the father of lies," they evinced base *ingratitude* towards their munificent and unwearied Benefactor.

Pride, discontent, and ambition, were all displayed in their transgression, for they were dissatisfied with a situation in which they were sufficiently wise, highly exalted and eminently happy, and aspired after an equality with God in supremacy and infinite knowledge.

"In pride, in reasoning pride themselves, Men would be gods, and rush into the skies."

So numerous and aggravated are the elements of criminality which may be traced in the first sin of man, that some have ventured to assert, that it virtually comprehends a violation of every precept of the decalogue. It may, however, be safely affirmed, that it involves an infringement of those two great principles which compose the foundation and substance of the moral law, *love to God and love to man*. There was the want of love to God, for Adam sacrificed the divine favour to a momentary indul-

gence; and the absence of love to man, because, although he knew that he was constituted the representative of the species, he hesitated not, in one unhappy hour, to incur a train of miseries upon the countless myriads of whom he was to be the parent. In short, in

whatever point of view the probation of man is contemplated, we shall discover ample reason to ascribe to *the creature folly and guilt, and to the Creator wisdom and goodness.*

P. T.

Edmonton.

ESSAYS ON NONCONFORMITY.

No. I.

THE differences which subsist among persons who bear the Christian name, chiefly respect doctrines of faith, the nature of a Christian church, and ritual observances. Of these, the last are the least important. Whether baptism should be administered only to adults who embrace the Christian religion, or to them, together with their families: and whether baptism should be administered with much or with little water, are the smallest of all the controversies which give rise to denominational distinctions. Differences with regard to the leading doctrines of Scripture are the most momentous, both because they respect the foundation of our hope, and because the affections of the soul are influenced by the truth or error which we hold. Differences with regard to the constitution of the Christian church occupy a station intermediate, in point of importance, between the other two.

On this topic, Dissenters have usually contented themselves with stating their views; at the ordinations of their ministers, which are occasions of comparatively rare occurrence, and scarcely allow adequate time for the due investigation of the subject. Meanwhile, to say nothing of our adult friends, some of whom, we fear, need in-

struction on this head, our children, as they advance towards maturity, ought to be told why their parents are Dissenters, and why the children are desired to follow in their steps.

The question of Nonconformity is now beginning to excite unwonted attention, and notwithstanding the valuable pamphlets which some of our brethren have lately written, no persons can deem a series of papers on the subject either superfluous in themselves, or out of place in this magazine.

In order to ascertain the nature of a Christian church, it is proper to consult the New Testament, rather than the Old, because, although piety, in its essential attributes, is the same at all times, the church of God, in its outward form, has manifestly undergone considerable changes.

It should be observed, that the covenant made with Abraham, and the ecclesiastical constitution of Moses, are by no means identical. The covenant made with Abraham included the elements of those evangelical blessings which will be as durable as the church itself, while the ecclesiastical system introduced by Moses was "decaying and waxing old, and was ready to vanish away," when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written.

Affairs of church and of state among the Jews were blended together for sufficient reasons, which apply not to us. The Jewish state was a theocracy. God was the sovereign, and the concerns of the nation were under his special care. Moses, Joshua, the Judges, and the Kings, were merely his viceregents. Their code of laws was framed accordingly: in it civil and sacred things were interwoven with each other. God, their sovereign, oftentimes gave supernatural intimations of the course which it was his pleasure that the rulers and the people should adopt; and he was willing at all times to interpose both in the way of guidance and of protection, whenever the rulers and the people were disposed to ask his counsel and to follow it.

The five books of Moses were not merely their Bible, but their code of national law. They neither had, nor needed, a legislature, for their laws were complete; or if at any time an emergency occurred, requiring a new statute, an appeal might be made directly to God. The Jews did not even need a sovereign, as Jehovah himself told them by his servant Samuel (1 Sam. iii. 7), when the question of their having a king was under discussion. To their request for a king God consented, but signified his consent in terms most fully corroborative of the position we are establishing. "The Lord said to Samuel, Harken to

the voice of this people in all that they say unto thee, (in reference, namely, to this subject,) for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." Both their application to God, by Samuel, when they desired a change in their civil government, and the divine answer to the application, show that they were under such a superintendence as rendered their case absolutely peculiar, and entirely falsifies the opinion, that their ecclesiastical polity may be considered, even in its outlines, as a model for the Christian church. It would be scarcely more unreasonable to look into the Pentateuch for the platform of a civil constitution, than to look into it for the platform of an ecclesiastical. The New Testament is the revelation of the last economy of religion, the economy under which we live. There we have the fullest announcement of the way of salvation; and there we have the clearest information relative to the church of Christ. How many sad errors respecting the religious duties of the magistrate, and the connection between the church and the state, would have been avoided, had this fact been observed.

Here, for the present, we stop. Next month we shall examine the Scriptures of the New Testament, for the purpose of ascertaining what is the true nature of a Christian church.

THE PROPOSAL OF A NEW CONGREGATIONAL HYMN-BOOK.

To the Editors.—THE attention of your readers was invited, in your December number, to the appointment of a Committee to prepare a volume of hymns, as a supplement to those of Watts.

I regret that I had it not in my power to attend the general meeting of the Congregational Union, at which that Committee was appointed, as I lost the opportunity of entreating my respected bre-

threw to consider the subject more maturely and deliberately. A measure so important should, I think, be considered by our ministers and churches, in all its bearings; and time should be allowed for the full expression of judgment and of feeling, on a point of so much difficulty, as well as of interest. It surprised me, therefore, I acknowledge, that an interval of a year was not allowed, in order to invite free and full discussion. But even now, I hope that the Committee will not proceed to publish, till the subject shall have been again brought before the consideration of an annual meeting.

The point to which I would particularly invite attention, is the extreme inconvenience and undesirableness of using, in our public worship, *two* hymn-books. It imposes unreasonable expense on the poor; it occasions a serious inconvenience to those who carry their hymn-books with them; and it at least doubles the difficulty of selecting hymns appropriate to the occasion, and to the discourse.

Why may not our congregations be effectually relieved from these evils? Why may we not have one hymn-book, which shall answer every purpose and satisfy every desire?

The answer which many will return is, "We cannot part with

Dr. Watts." Neither need we, I reply. Let us retain as many of his psalms and hymns as we are accustomed to sing in our public and social worship. About three hundred would, I think, include these; and instead of retaining the rest, (which we may well spare,) let us have two or three hundred more, of the best which our language furnishes. If it be the prevailing wish that Dr. Watts's should be kept separate from the rest, let the three hundred of his hymns form the first part of the volume, and the rest be added in a continued series, as a supplement, with one general index of subjects and another of texts. But I should strongly recommend that all the hymns in the volume should be under one system of arrangement, as well as one series of numbers.

I yield to no one in veneration or affection for Dr. Watts, but I see nothing at variance with those feelings in the plan now recommended; and I think the time is quite arrived for rescuing our churches from the evils and inconveniences of using two hymn-books; to say nothing of the unhappy partition of Watts's Hymns into three separate books, with a triple series of numbers, in addition to the Book of Psalms.

H. F. B.

ON "PASSING TRIALS" FOR THE DISSENTING MINISTRY.

ALLOW me to express the satisfaction with which I read the earnest and forcible appeal* of your honoured correspondent, J. A. J., to "the Committees of our Colleges," on the necessity of a more lengthened academical course for the candidates for the ministry

amongst us, in accordance with the practices of our American brethren. May I, however, be permitted to remind him, and the most influential of his brethren in the ministry, that they possess the means of checking the mischiefs that must inevitably result in times like these, from the introduction of raw, half-taught men into the pas-

* Vide Cong. Mag. Dec. 1833, p. 723.

toral office amongst us. Anterior to ordination in the more learned periods of nonconformity, a *bona fide* examination of talents and attainments was required, and the youthful candidates for the dissenting ministry, even when ordained in private by their ejected fathers, were called to pass through a previous examination.

At the first public ordination amongst Dissenters, June, 1694, Mr. Calamy, the candidate, was strictly examined by the learned and acute Mr. Alsop.*

It is probable that our forefathers found that the time consumed by such examinations could not be conveniently spared at the ordination service, and therefore a distinct exercise, called *passing trials*, was instituted by them for young men leaving the academies, that they might present to vacant churches credentials of their abilities, and satisfy those who should ordain them that they were not about to lay hands on novices.

Allow me to present your readers with a document illustrative of this usage amongst Dissenters a century ago. It relates to a Mr. Wild, who I think was once a minister at Birmingham. I have transcribed it from the original MS. in the possession of a friend.

"London, May ye 12, 1741.

"Whereas Mr. Gervas Wild, being desirous of devoting himself to the work of the ministry of the Gospel, and having spent several years in academical studies in order thereunto, under the tuition of the learned and judicious Mr. John Eames (from whom he has a commendable character) in order to his more regular entrance on the ministry, and his more comfortable progress in that service, hath desired us to make trial of his gifts and fitness for it: We do hereby testify that it appears to us that he has made a good improvement of his time, and that his studies, in order to furnish himself with learning, have been blessed with happy success, and that he has in our presence performed a theological disputation in Latin, and

given a specimen of his abilities for the pulpit, by delivering a sermon in English, both which he did to our abundant satisfaction. We do therefore approve of his entrance on the ministerial work, as judging him to be well qualified for it, and do most heartily recommend him to the blessing of God and to the service of the churches of Christ.

"David Jennings, John Guyse, John Richardson, E. Godwin, John Hubbard, John Halford, Daniel Stevens."

This method has dropped into disusage amongst us within a quarter of a century, and I am grieved to say nothing equivalent to it has been adopted in its place. It may be said that the testimonials of tutors and committees are sufficient; for the sake of argument I will admit it; but I would ask, are they required by the churches, or by the ministers who officiate at ordination services? I have known a few instances in which men have obtained a ready ordination, who could never have induced their tutors to give them credentials: thus our churches may be cursed with incompetent or unholy pastors, and our best interests betrayed, through the want of christian vigilance on the part of those already in the pastoral office. The number of years spent in preparatory studies, after all, is an uncertain and sometimes a fallacious test. Let then actual examinations precede ordination, as amongst the congregationalists of New England, and those who complain may employ a salutary check upon that negligence which, in my judgment, threatens our piety and influence more than any thing amongst us besides.

I would, in conclusion, beg to ask, whether this subject does not well deserve the attention of the Congregational Union at its next annual meeting? I should like to hear our friend J. A. J. suggest some arrangements to correct this evil in future.

Z. Z.

* Vide W. Wilson, vol. iv. pp. 73. 411.

REVIEW OF BOOKS.

Letters on the Divine Origin and Authority of the Holy Scriptures. By the Rev. James Carlile, junior, Minister of the Scots Church, in Mary's Abbey, (Capel Street) Dublin. 2 Vols. 12mo. pp. 348, 223. London: Fellows, Ludgate Street. 1834.

To write on the evidences of Christianity is, in the present day, an arduous undertaking. It is a subject on which so many great names have tried their strength; on which we have so many luminous, beautiful, elaborate, and convincing performances, that, at the first glance, it appears altogether a work of supererogation, to interpose an additional volume, or even a single page. It is like adding to that which is complete, and accumulating where we have already a redundancy. A volume of no small dimensions would be required to give the titles and character of the works on this topic which have been published. Were a collection of these to be made, from the earliest apologies to the latest duodecimos and pamphlets, no contracted department in a public library would be necessary to contain them. We venture to express a hope that such a department, richly filled and carefully arranged, will be provided in the common property of our Denomination—the CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY.

To some man of literary leisure it would be an amusing occupation to trace the arguments which are to be met with in our selections, abstracts, compendiums, brief views, and six-penny and one-penny pamphlets, up to their

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source—the fountains, into which so many have dipped their pitchers, at which they have slaked their thirst, and then poured out for the generation that followed and those that succeeded it. The copious supply, in some few cases, carefully and honestly traced to its origin, but in the greater number of instances unknown, or unacknowledged as to its source, has wrought effects the most beneficial, on the infidel, the sceptic, the half-convinced, and wavering inquirer. We are fond, however, of acknowledgments. Gratitude is due where favours have been received; and we know not why it should be withheld where the obligation is of a literary kind. We have not yet heard any satisfactory answer why the treasures of Macknight, and Leland, and Lardner, should be plundered of their stores, and no thanks rendered by the man who has been enriched with the spoil. That was a praiseworthy practice, adopted by not a few of our forefathers, of prefixing to their thick quartos, or massive folios, a list of all the authors, ancient and modern, to whom they had been indebted for their facts, arguments, and illustrations. It evinced their humility, while it displayed their learning; and if it might excite a doubt as to the originality of their genius, it gave a most satisfactory pledge of their industry. The readers of former days demanded *reading writers*. They were days too rich in thought, though defective, perhaps, in expression. Like

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the silks, the tapestry, and the brocades of the period, there might be the absence of that which we now call grace and beauty, but there was intrinsic value; and while the more flimsy texture of these power-loom times, are, from their very structure, doomed to a speedy decay, and a not distant dissolution, the works to which we are referring will, in all probability, long escape that *edax vetustas*, which is destined eventually to consume, and utterly to abolish all the labour of mere human hands, whether strong as the veil in the temple of Solomon, or flimsy as the cob-web draperies which are displayed in our parks, our ball-rooms, and our watering-places during the heat of the summer months.

The author of the volumes before us has made a very free use of the writings in defence of revelation of those who have preceded him; but he has, with all becoming humility, made his acknowledgments of obligation to the parties to whom he is indebted. With the latter circumstance we have been gratified; though we think his work would have been more useful to students and young ministers, had some such list as those to which we have referred above, been prefixed, or *affixed* to his volumes. He might have given, by the addition of works to which he himself was under no obligation, the titles of a series of volumes, with the existence of which, at least, every young theologian ought to be made acquainted. We know of but one objection to this. The volumes before us are a series of Letters; and letters addressed to ladies too. But we scarcely think the objection valid; for the topics discussed, or incidentally alluded to in these letters, make such a demand on the attention,

and suppose in the reader so very extensive an acquaintance with the subjects brought under review, that the addition of a list of authors would appear neither pedantic nor out of place. That the ladies to whom these letters were addressed are possessed of the qualifications necessary to understand and duly to appreciate their value we have no reason to question: there is one reason which it is not necessary for us to mention, that leads us to the conclusion, that they can fully comprehend the different trains of argumentation employed, and the learned and classical allusions with which the work abounds. We hope a very great number of other ladies may be found, to whom these volumes, instead of being repulsive, will prove a high intellectual treat. It will be no disgrace to them to be able to read with attention, and to form a correct estimate of the worth of such a production as Mr. Carlile's.

There is something novel in the plan which our author has adopted. The grounds on which he deviates from the course marked out by former Christian advocates, are given in his exposition of the manner in which he states his argument. "This will be found to be considerably different from that which has been usually followed in books on the Christian Evidences." The reasons for this deviation will be found in the introductory letter, *Preface*, p. vi.

"Every thing that comes, from the Deity bears the impress of his workmanship. Whether we cast our eyes towards one of those glorious orbs that wheel their mighty revolutions through the immensity of space, or fix them on the minutest object that our organs of sight are capable of discerning, we are never at a loss for a single moment to determine who contrived it and who brought it into existence. From the sun that shines in glory upon us, and fills up

the whole vault of heaven with light, to the minutest flower or insect that occupies its point of space, or walks its little rounds, we see at one glance that the contrivance, and the formation of it are works that infinitely transcend the skill and power of man." "Now, if the Bible be the work of God, it might be expected to be as much distinguished from all books of human origin, as a real natural object, that is, a real work of God, is from an imitation of such an object, even as the sun in the firmament is from any flame that man can kindle. And this, I am persuaded, is the fact; and that nothing more is wanting to convince any man who will give his mind to the subject, of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, than an examination of the book itself."

Our author adds, "that such a mode of examination seems to have seldom been thought of." This, as we shall presently see, is hardly correct. It is, indeed, true, that the greater number who have written on the evidences of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, have confined themselves, though not exclusively, to those which are external; but there are some who have written as exclusively on the internal evidences. The plan very frequently adopted is to argue the possibility, the probability, and the certainty of a revelation from God to man. The next step is to dwell on the claims of the New Testament to be received as such a revelation. Good Bishop Beveridge has very ingeniously brought Christianity into contrast with Judaism, Mahomedanism, and Paganism; concluding very accurately, as appears to us, that if the two latter are not for a moment to be compared with the religion of the New Testament, the first is to be regarded only as part of Christianity—the preface, the prelude, the faint outline.

Paley dwells, in the first place, on the antecedent credibility of miracles, and having devoted a few pages to a refutation of Hume's sophistry, he passes on at once to a

consideration of the direct historical evidence. But even in this part of his subject, a reference to the third chapter of the first proposition will show that Paley did not omit the testimony of the sacred writers. When he comes to a consideration of what he terms the auxiliary evidences of Christianity, his arguments are deduced from topics, all of which may, with the greatest propriety, be referred to the evidence of divine authority, furnished by the books of sacred Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, themselves.—Such as PROPHECY; the MORALS of the Gospel; the CANDOUR of the writers of the New Testament; the IDENTITY of Christ's character; the ORIGINALITY of Christ's character; and undesignated coincidences—a topic which this able and most luminous writer has pursued at great length in his *Horæ Paulineæ*. A reference to "Macknight's Truth of the Gospel History," will show, that that elaborate writer has touched very frequently and copiously on the internal evidence. Leland's learned work again is an invaluable production. Its train of argumentation is indeed confined; but it admits of the introduction of a variety of different topics, of which he has, with great judgment, availed himself. To prove the advantage and necessity of the Christian revelation from the state of religion in the ancient heathen world, especially with relation to a correct knowledge of one God, a suitable mode of worship, an exalted code of morals, and a state of future rewards and punishments, was, in fact, to appeal to the internal evidences of the Scriptures as a proof of their divine authority. It brings into contrast the confusion, absurdity, immorality, and the uncertainty which hung

over the future among the heathen, with the clear and full display of the divine character, the pure morality, and the distinct and evident exhibition of the reality, the terrors, and the glory of the unseen world, which are so unreservedly disclosed to us in the Word of God. Grotius begins his work, *De veritate Religionis Christianæ*, with proofs of the existence, unity, and perfections of the Deity; and when he has yet further proved the truth and divine authority of Judaism, and answered some few objections, he proceeds, in his second book, to the subject indicated by the very title of his volume, the truth of the Christian religion. This is followed by a confutation of false religions. These are contrasted with Christianity, inasmuch as their ignorance and pollution, and their justification of the most enormous crimes are, by implication, opposed to the light, purity, and uncompromising character of the religion of the Son of God.

We hesitate not to affirm, that this external, or rather combined evidence, (for the internal is blended in a greater or a less degree with the external,) is amply sufficient to confute gainsayers, and to satisfy the humble inquiries of the just. Every man who can give the necessary time, and who has sufficient patience and perseverance to travel through even one of the works to which we have referred, may obtain the most complete satisfaction on this important point. If he engage in the labour as an infidel, a sceptic, or a waverer, he will not rise from the completed undertaking, (if he pursue it with impartiality, and with even a moderate degree of ability,) under any other character than that of a firm believer in the truth and divine authority of

the Christian religion. There is unquestionably great force in what Mr. C. says on this subject.

"Now, without casting a shadow of doubt on the conclusiveness of the historical or external evidence to the truth of Christianity, I confess, it appears to me to be meagre and limited, in comparison with what might be expected to be produced for the genuineness of any work of God. One might have, *a priori*, expected that, altogether independent of human testimony, a book which has God for its author, would have stood forth perfectly unique amongst all other books, transcendently superior to them all; and thus, as evidently the workmanship of God as a living man among an assembly of statues or automata."

We do not hesitate to acknowledge that the internal evidences are amply sufficient. He who, with an unbiassed mind, and above all, with a prayerful spirit, reads the Holy Scriptures, will not remain in doubt as to their divinity. He will find it impressed on every page, and be prompt to exclaim, these are not words of man's devising; they are "spirit and life," and must have proceeded from God himself. But it is very desirable to obtain in discussions of this kind, the most distinct conceptions of our own meaning, and the views of the authors whom we consult. Now when Mr. C. says that his chief objection to these trains of argumentation (grounded on external evidence,) "is not to their conclusiveness, but to their being represented as the chief leading evidence for the inspiration of Scripture," he appears to us to confound the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures with their historical truth, and with the genuineness of the different books which compose the sacred canon. Accurate discrimination will here furnish the best ground for conclusive reasoning. A work may be genuine—that is, it may have been written by the author to whom it is

ascribed, while, like the great work of Cervantes, it may not be true. A book also may be true as to the facts which it records, while, like "Anson's Voyage round the World," it may not be the work of the person whose name it bears. Or a book may be both genuine and true, in the senses above explained, which makes no pretence to divine authority. The books which compose the volume we call the Bible lay claim to the three. They were written by the authors to whom they are ascribed; they contain a faithful record of facts; and they were penned under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. They frequently advert to the latter high distinction; and the best proof that they possess is to be found in the sublimity by which they are distinguished, the harmony of sentiment which prevails among them, and the spirit they uniformly breathe. Admit, then, their inspiration and their truth and genuineness follow of course. For if God inspired them, they contain nothing but truth; and those who wrote as he commanded and aided them, would neither conceal their own names, nor affix those of fictitious persons. But it is equally evident, that if the truth of the facts recorded in the sacred volume be established, the genuineness of many of the books which compose it, and the divine authority of all them, will be evinced at the same time. If Moses brought out the children of Israel miraculously from Egypt, his commission was divine; if Jesus of Nazareth worked miracles, died on the cross, arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, he was the promised Messiah, the chosen of his Father, and the Saviour of fallen man. We then put the question to Mr. Carlisle, Is it

wise to depreciate one class of evidence to exalt another? The external to exalt the internal? We believe that they mutually support each other; and, together with the best of all evidences, the effect of the truth on the mind and heart of the man who receives it aright, thus form a three-fold cord, which infidelity cannot sever, nor all its strength snap asunder.

Our author's objection to many treatises on the evidences of Christianity is this—that they do not take up the book of God as a whole, and that they confine themselves to the New Testament History. Paley is referred to. His words are these:—"Undoubtedly our Saviour recognizes the prophetic character of many of their ancient writers (Jewish): so far, therefore, we are bound, as Christians, to go. But to make Christianity answerable with its life, for the circumstantial truth of each passage of the Old Testament, the genuineness of every book, the information, judgment, and fidelity of every writer in it, is to bring—I will not say great—but unnecessary difficulties into the whole system. These books were universally read and received by the Jews in our Saviour's time. He and his Apostles, in common with all other Jews, referred to them, alluded to them, used them. Yet, except when he expressly ascribes a divine authority to particular predictions, I do not know that we can strictly draw any conclusion from the books being so used and applied, beside the proof, which it unquestionably is, of their notoriety and reception at that time."—*Paley's Evid.* Part III. ch. iii.

The remarks of Mr. Carlisle on this passage are as follow :

"Paley protests against involving the New Testament in the question of the in-

sploration of the Old Testament. He says that the testimony of the New Testament furnishes a strong confirmation to the Jewish Scriptures, but asserts that the evidence of the truth of the New Testament stands altogether independent of that of the Old Testament. Nay, he goes so far as to assert, that the quotations from the Old Testament, by the New Testament writers, are not to be regarded as proving any thing more than that the books of the Old Testament existed in their days."—p. 7.

This is hardly fair. A construction is put on Paley's words, which they do not admit. But, moreover, it became Mr. C. to consider the whole argument of this eminent writer. The conclusion of it shows the kind of antagonists with whom he contended. "I have thought it necessary," says he, "to state this point explicitly, because a fashion, revived by Voltaire, and pursued by the disciples of his school, seems to have much prevailed of late, of attacking Christianity through the sides of Judaism. Some objections of this kind are founded on misconstruction, some in exaggeration; but all proceed on a supposition, which has not been made out by argument, viz. that the attestation, which the author and first teachers of Christianity gave to the divine mission of Moses and the Prophets, extends to every point and portion of the Jewish History; and so extends, as to make Christianity responsible, in its own credibility, for the circumstantial truth (I had almost said for the critical exactness) of every narrative contained in the Old Testament."—*Paley, ubi supra.*

One single remark will, we think, justify Paley in the mode of argumentation which he adopts, while it will serve to evince the different lights in which he and Mr. C. regarded a defence of revelation. Paley wrote to convince the unbeliever; and Paley,

whether wisely or not, we do not pretend to affirm, makes large concessions; Carlike writes to settle the fluctuating, or establish in the truth the man who already believes: he speaks, therefore, without hesitation, of the "whole Book of God." He begins at the beginning; views the historical, ritual, typical, and prophetic connection of the Old and New Testament; and while he does not hesitate to avail himself of a confirmation of its truth from heathen and uninspired Christian testimony, proves its divinity by a more copious and enlarged induction of evidence than has hitherto entered into the compositions of our Christian advocates.

But we must pass on to the second Letter, "On the Scripture Method of teaching and confirming Religious Doctrines, by means of a Historical Narrative." It is argued, that this method adapts the Scriptures to the instruction of men of every degree of intellectual power or acquirement; that it gives to the doctrine great strength; that it necessarily refers the Bible to God as its author, since none but he could have planned and brought into existence the events recorded in the scripture history; that this method widens greatly the means of confirming truth and detecting error. These topics are ably illustrated by contrasting the fictions of Mohammed, and the wild vagaries of Hindooism, with the historical facts of the Old and New Testament.

This closes the first or preliminary part of the work. The SECOND PART, which confirms the truth of scripture history, embodies the following topics:—"I. The Scriptures written by different persons in different ages of the world.—II. On the Simplicity and Candour of the Scripture Nar-

native.—III. On the Consistency of the Scripture Narrative with itself.—IV. On the Consistency of the Scripture Narrative with other Parts of Scripture." These are included in four Letters, and form the first section of this part, which is headed "*Internal Evidences of Truth.*" The second section is headed "*External Confirmations of the Truth of the Scripture History,*" and embraces the following subjects:—"I. Effects resulting from the facts recorded in Scripture, still existing.—II. The same subject continued—Existence of the Christian Body, Jews and Mohammedans.—III. Confirmations of the Scripture History in the Traditions and Histories of various Nations.—IV. Confirmations of the Scripture History in existing Natural Phenomena, and in the State of various Countries, and their architectural Remains."

The third section of this part is on the Prophecy and Types which are interwoven with the History. The THIRD PART is devoted to a consideration of the system of doctrines contained in the Bible, and intimately connected with its history, their sublimity and spirituality.

The above is a brief analysis of the contents of these able, interesting, and unanswerable volumes; in which, if we meet with but little that is new, there is the omission of scarcely one argument or one illustration that is striking and important. The author's range is evidently very extensive; and many of the topics which are brought under review would each require a volume large as the *Horæ Paulinæ* of Paley, or the volumes of Halyburton, Macknight, or Leland. He has, therefore, done well to say, that "his volumes make no pretensions to supersede any other work on

the same subject." His work is, indeed, a synopsis of the evidences of revealed religion; a brief view of what has been written by the learned and the pious of other days, arranged in a very judicious manner, expressed with great clearness, not unfrequently with no little force, and occasionally illustrated by new images, and enforced and rendered impressive by a novel, if not by an original style of argumentation. The work will be, therefore, valuable as an *enchiridion* to the well-read, and as a text book to the student who is prosecuting his inquiries: the style will please the man of taste, and the general facility and beauty of illustration will render it a suitable present for the many persons of that sex for whose improvement it was originally composed. But we must justify our praise by citing some passages.

The following remarks on the candour of the sacred writers deserve notice:

"There is one feature of the scripture narrative which deserves particular notice, as an indication of fidelity and artless simplicity; namely, its candour in recording the faults, nay, the crimes, of those whom it might be expected to hold up to unqualified admiration, and that too without palliation or excuse. The Old Testament history purports to be a history of the ancestry of the Jewish nation, written by Hebrews, for the information of Hebrews; and if we judge from the histories preserved by other nations of their ancestry, we might expect to find the principal personages, whose lives are recorded in the Old Testament, represented as models of perfection. But so far is this from being the fact, that there is no one who appears peculiarly conspicuous among them, of whom some heinous sin or shameful act is not recorded. The father and the mother of the whole race, under the instigation of the serpent, discredit God's word, disobey his command, and are thrust disgracefully out of paradise; their eldest son murdered his brother; Noah drinks to excess; Abraham is guilty, in

two instances, of mean prevarication; Isaac is guilty of the same fault; Jacob, and Rebecca, his mother, are guilty of treachery and falsehood; Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, commit such sins as provoke God to condemn them to die in the wilderness; David is guilty of dissimulation, of murder, and adultery, under very aggravated circumstances; Solomon falls into idolatry at the instigation of his wives, and brings calamities on his people. To these might be added many similar instances.

"The New Testament is an account of the origin of the Christian Church, and, as Christians are always held responsible by the world for the faults of persons of their own party, it might have been expected that, in their own records of the origin of sect or party, no stigma would have been attached to its original and most conspicuous officers. But with the same candour which was manifested by the Old Testament writers, we find in the New Testament many faults recorded by the Apostles. They dispute which of them shall be the greatest, and then are ashamed to tell what they were disputing about. Two of them ask of Jesus to bring down fire from heaven to destroy a village where they were not received, and are sharply rebuked by him. The same two persuade, as it would seem, their mother to request of Jesus that one of them might sit on his right hand, and the other on his left, in his kingdom, which provokes the jealousy and anger of the rest. All of them, after the most solemn protestations that they would rather die with him than forsake him, on the very first appearance of danger, make their escape, and leave him alone in the hands of his enemies. Peter denies him with oaths and curses, and afterwards falls into dissimulation, and is publicly withstood and rebuked by Paul."

—Vol. I. pp. 56--58.

On one of the difficulties of infidelity, our author's remarks are as follow:

"It is the more remarkable, that those who are disposed to reject the New Testament account of the rise of the Christian Church, should not feel themselves bound to furnish some other account of that phenomenon, seeing that they are generally very positive in their assertions of the impracticability of converting the present heathen nations to Christianity; and treat all missionaries who engage in such an enterprise with derision. When they look at heathenism as it is actually presented to them, and consider the total

revolution that must take place in the mind and outward circumstances of every heathen who embraces the Gospel; the dangers which he must brave, and the obstacles which he must surmount, they do not scruple to declare that it is impossible to convert them without the aid of miracles; and they stigmatize the very attempt to convert them as the wildest scheme that ever took possession of the brain of an enthusiast; and yet when they are required to account for the conversion of the whole Roman empire from a heathenism which had obtained full possession of the minds of the people, which was established and fortified by law, and defended most pertinaciously by all the power of the civil governors, who massacred thousands and tens of thousands in their endeavours to support it; the mighty struggle and revolution dwindle all at once into so easy and trivial a thing, as scarcely to require any cause; and they embrace any flimsy cobweb speculation that may be suggested to them.

"Some, perhaps, may object that it is as difficult to account for the rise of Paganism as of Christianity. I answer, that we can trace the origin of Paganism, if we believe the Bible; and that even if we do not, the reason why we can distinctly trace it, is merely that no histories have come down to us of so ancient a date. Besides, by the Scripture history, Paganism gradually supplanted a purer religion; and therefore the change was not likely to attract the attention of historians. But Christianity rose in very different circumstances. It emerged suddenly from two sects, equally hostile to it and to one another, namely, Jews and Pagans, at a period, too, with the history of which we are well acquainted. Its introduction into the Roman empire formed the foundation of the most remarkable epoch of its history; and it is inconceivable, that the true origin of so wonderful a revolution should lie buried in utter oblivion, and a false one be palmed upon the world, and universally received by all succeeding annalists of the empire itself."—Vol. I. p. 137--139.

The following observations, on the recent hypothesis of an infidel, are worthy of attention.

"His hypothesis is this: he supposes the narratives of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles to be, in their general tenor, true. He freely admits the existence and preaching of John the Baptist, and the holiness of his character; also the life and preaching of the Lord

Jesus Christ, and the genuine holiness of his character. He admits the correctness of the sacred writers in all matters concerning the manners, customs, and institutions of the times of which they wrote; but he supposes that, on the subject of religion, their minds were biassed, so that they themselves might, to a certain extent, be deceived in what was connected with the subject, and also that their anxiety to spread their religious tenets might induce them, to a certain extent, knowingly to deceive others.

"He shows that the Jews were in a very excitable state; that there was a general expectation among them that a great prophet was to arise, who was to be their king, and that 'thenceforward they were to be no longer in subjection to the Romans;' that in regard to morality they were notoriously corrupt. He supposes John the Baptist to have been a man of holy and austere life, roused to energy by the wickedness of the times, and to have gone forth denouncing the corruption of the Jewish rulers, and calling upon man to repent and turn to God, as a fit preparation for the coming of the deliverer. He supposes Jesus Christ to have been a young man of similar character, aroused also by the state of his country, and the preaching of John the Baptist, to adopt the same strain of address, and, being gifted with powerful eloquence, and feeling strongly what he said, he commanded the attention and reverence of the people. The whole of this process he illustrates by continual reference to the effects of the preaching of Luther, Wesley, Whitfield, and other Christian ministers.

"With regard to the miracles, he supposes, that some of them might be real cures of certain diseases, which experience has proved may sometimes be cured by strongly excited feelings, and refers to such cures in modern times; showing, that Mr. Wesley and others believed that miracles of this kind were performed in answer to their prayers. Other miracles he supposes to have been exaggerations of ordinary cures into miracles; and others, he supposes to have been frauds, practised for the purpose of furthering a cause which Jesus and his apostles regarded as one of supreme importance, and refers to the pious frauds resorted to by some of the missionaries of the Church of Rome. The raising of Lazarus from the dead, he supposes to have been contrived by Lazarus and his sisters, for the purpose of exalting the credit of their friend, the Lord Jesus, and of conse, to have been countenanced by him.

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"With respect to the resurrection of Jesus himself from the dead, he imagines that the apostles were for a time confounded by our Lord's crucifixion; but that, being strongly attached to him, it required only a person of sufficient energy to revive the expectations which they had indulged in him; that such a person was found in Peter, who formed the scheme of taking away the body of Jesus, and then giving out that he had risen from the dead, and would return again in great glory to deliver the people; and that the disciples, being previously disposed to receive any story that would seem to justify them in following the Lord Jesus, eagerly caught at the idea of his resurrection, and promulgated it without much examination. And he shows, by the instance of Joannah Southcote, that men may be led very far by enthusiasm in the belief of absurdities, rather than relinquish an expectation which they have once entertained.

"The propagation of these tenets and narratives among the heathen, he supposes might be accounted for by the powerful preaching of the resurrection from the dead, and a future judgment; that these doctrines might work on their fears, and induce them to seek to escape from so awful a danger, strongly depicted to them by the eloquence of the first preachers of Christianity, by embracing the Christian doctrine: and again refers to the experience of Wesley, Whitfield, and others, in proof of the practicability of producing such effects by the announcing of doctrines calculated to excite terror.

"In proceeding to make observations on this hypothesis, I would observe in the first place, that it is mere hypothesis, totally destitute of evidence, and not even making pretensions to evidence. Not one syllable has the author of it been able to produce, from the many enemies of Christianity, contradictory to the narratives of the evangelists. The only opposing statement is, that which is recorded by the evangelists themselves, as having been offered by the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre; but the testimony of the soldiers referred to a time, when, according to their own account, they were so profoundly asleep, as to be utterly unconscious of what was passing in their presence; nay, and it asserts the commission of a crime which could not possibly have been committed, had any one of the guards been awake, or disposed to take alarm. The sole attempt of the author is to prove that such possibly might have been the origin of Christianity, but without a shadow of proof

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that Christianity did so originate; so that, to relinquish the narratives of the evangelists for this hypothesis, would be to relinquish the testimony of men on their oath, but under the immediate danger of ruin and death, for an unfounded imagination, and thus leave the rise of the Christian church altogether unexplained. I can hardly, therefore, regard this hypothesis as furnishing even a hypothetical account of the rise of Christianity consistent with facts; for I confess, that I cannot conceive how so important a revolution as the introduction of Christianity into the Roman empire, so suddenly, and at so enlightened a period, should have been unrecorded, unexplained, and (if the account given of it in the New Testament be false) left to be accounted for wholly by an unsupported hypothesis.

"For I observe further, that it is necessary to keep in mind, that the speculation which we are examining is an attempt to account for the most important revolution, beyond all comparison, that stands on record in the history of the world, the influence of which is felt at the present day, as strongly and as extensively as it was in the first age after its commencement. It is an account, to account for a revolution that changed the whole structure of society throughout the Roman empire; its laws, its usages, its popular superstitions, its amusements;—a revolution which gave men totally new views of moral duty, and of moral obligation, of God, and of futurity; a revolution which gave exclusive authority to a religion derived from a despised and hated people, which gave to their sacred books a controul over the conduct, nay, the very thoughts of men, from the emperor to the peasant; a revolution which invested a few fishermen and mechanics of Galilee with a name and veneration surpassing that which was paid to the most illustrious individuals in the history of the empire, its statesmen, its generals, its philosophers, its poets, or its orators; a revolution which now, after eighteen hundred years have elapsed, fills the most civilized portion of the world with its effects, and still keeps such fast hold of the minds of men, that it requires some resolution for a man to avow, that he does not acknowledge the law and the sovereignty of one who was born and lived a Jew, and who was crucified as a malefactor and a slave. All this mighty change the author ascribes to enthusiasm, and eloquence of two or three individuals, young men, fishermen, and mechanics, who went about preaching repentance in Judea, and who did not speak the general languages of the

empire; and to the promulgation of some pretended miracles, said to have been wrought among a people who were ridiculed throughout the empire for their credulity on such subjects. Surely there is not here a cause adequate to the effects, not a foundation sufficiently deep or extensive for such a stupendous superstructure."—Vol. I. pp. 143—148.

Mahomedanism founded on the basis of Christianity.

"A third great class or division of men, in regard to religious peculiarities, who derive their existence, as a separate body, from the Scriptures, is the Mahomedan body. Mahomedans are widely scattered over the world; all the western parts of Asia, Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia, Persia, and the south-western parts of Tartary, are in their possession. Multitudes of them are scattered to the eastward, and northward, and southward, beyond the boundaries of these countries,—in Hindostan, in the islands of the Indian ocean, and in the Russian empire. They possess, also, the whole northern coast of Africa, and make considerable encroachment on Europe, coming as far westward as the shores of the Adriatic.

"The peculiarities of this sect are, that they believe in the existence of one God, the God who made the world according to the Mosaic narrative, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; all of whom they acknowledge as the servants of God, nay, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom also they acknowledge as a great prophet. They believe in a day of judgment, a heaven and hell, making, however, many alterations in the account of a future state given in the Bible.

"This sect arose in Arabia, a country immediately bordering upon Palestine, the very country through which the Israelites are stated to have passed in their journey from Egypt to Canaan, and in which Mount Sinai is, where, according to the Mosaic account, the law was given. It arose after Christianity had existed for upwards of six hundred years, and had greatly prevailed in all the neighbouring countries.

"The religion of Mahomed, therefore, is founded on the basis of the Scriptures. It proceeds upon the truth of the Scripture History, with some variations, derived partly from oral tradition, and partly from apocryphal books of the Old and New Testaments, some at least of which are still extant. That religion, therefore, is to be regarded rather as a corruption of the religion of the Bible, than as a new religion; and, indeed, does not depart so far from the Bible as some nominal forms of Christianity. Its va-

riations from the Bible are chiefly in doctrines respecting spiritual things, and in its code of morality, and not in the historical facts recorded in the Bible.

"It is manifest, therefore, that the Koran could never have existed but for the previous existence of the Jews as a separate people, and of the Christian church, and we have seen that these two bodies could never have existed, but as a consequence of the truth of the Scripture history. In this view, therefore, the religion of Mahommed is one of the effects still extant of the facts recorded in Scripture. But this religion contains an independent testimony to the truth of Scripture history; perhaps the strongest confirmation that can be produced of the truth of any history. It is known that Arabia, within which, the scene is laid of some of the most remarkable events recorded in the Old Testament, is inhabited by a people who have been, as far back as profane history reaches, in perpetual warfare with the Jews, as indeed they always have been with all the neighbouring nations. That people never received the Scriptures, but before the era of Mahommed, practised some species of paganism. It is obvious, therefore, that a fictitious history, compiled by the Jews, the scene of which was laid in Arabia, was not very likely to be received by the Arabs as truth.

"Now, it has so happened, as we have seen, that a religion has been set up in that country, equally hostile both to the Jewish and Christian. By no people in the world are the Jews held in so much execration and contempt as by the Mahomedans: nor is there any people spoken of in terms of such unqualified severity in the Koran, as the Jews. Their teachers are called devils, and they are consigned to the most horrible torments. Yet, in spite of all this, the Koran admits the leading facts of the Scripture narrative as true. It does not give any formal repetition of the narrative, but it refers to the principal events of it as matters of notoriety. Adam and Eve, Noah and his sons, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are spoken of as familiarly in the Koran as they are in the Scriptures. How is this to be accounted for? Is it to be supposed, that Mahommed would burden his imposture with the difficulties of a history, which, if it was not true, must have been contradicted by the Arabian records or traditions? Would he, for the sake of pleasing the Jews, represent the Arabs, his own nation, nay, his own family, as having sprung from the son of Abraham's bond servant? (For the family of Koreish, to

which Mahommed belonged, trace their genealogy to this day up to Ishmael.) Or rather, did he find the traditions of these facts so firmly rooted in the minds of his countrymen, that he saw it would be in vain to attempt to contradict them, and, therefore, chose to found his religion on a history, the truth of which they previously believed?"—Vol. I. pp. 168—171.

The Book of the Unveiling: an Exposition. With Notes. London: Baxter. 1833. 12mo. pp. 110.

Outlines of Lectures on the Book of Daniel. By the Rev. F. A. Cox, LL.D. 2d Edit. London: Westley and Davis. 1833. 12mo. pp. 152.

WHETHER it is to be considered as the effect of design on the part of the author, or is to be ascribed to a degree of obtuseness peculiar to ourselves, certain it is, that when we saw the former of these works announced in some of the periodicals, we were perfectly at a loss to conceive what could be the nature of its contents; and our mind was left in a state of wonderment and curiosity. The reader will judge of our surprise, when told that, on the book being put into our hand, we discovered that the whole mystery had been created by the use of a Saxon instead of an Ecclesiastical Latin word; and that by "The Book of the Unveiling," nothing more was meant than "The Book of the Revelation."

It is not impossible, that had the writer selected any other topic within the wide range of theological science, as the subject of discussion, he would have found us ready to subscribe to the views which he holds, and the positions which he is prepared to sustain: but so numerous and diversified are the opinions which are entertained on that of prophecy, and especially the predictive announcements contained in the Apoca-

lypse, that he will not deem it strange if we should call in question the validity of some of his statements, or the legitimacy of some of his canons of prophetic interpretation. Indeed, until some more definite, thoroughgoing, consistent, and soberly speaking, *unveiling* scheme of exposition be adopted, it would be preposterous to expect any thing like agreement, or even approximation towards agreement in opinion, on matters of so much difficulty and dispute. We are candid enough to confess, that were we, with our present views, to publish on the subject, we should not know in what quarter to look for an individual who would acquiesce in many of the conclusions at which we have arrived. Under the influence of such a conviction, it would ill become us to assume an air of infallibility, or hastily and sweepingly to condemn any thing that has been written by an author, whose mind is obviously imbued with the principles of revealed truth, and whose only desire it evidently is, irrespective of all systematic, theoretic, or fanatical bias, to ascertain and communicate the mind of the spirit, as contained in a considerable portion of the Word of God.

The design of this little work is to furnish a simple and more obvious analysis of the Apocalypse than has yet been presented; and by means of a paraphrastic exposition, to make those portions of the prophecy which the writer considers to be already fulfilled, plain and profitable to ordinary readers. He endeavours to establish a parallelism in the prophecy, which he thinks is decidedly indicative of the structure of the book. One very important rule which he lays down is—that in every case

the same symbol must have the same significance: to illustrate which, the vision of the horses, chapter vi. is adduced. The book of Revelation is, erroneously in our opinion, regarded as a prophetic history *only* of the church; and all applications of it to the fall of the Roman empire, the progress of Mohammedan delusion, and more modern convulsions in the state of the world, are stated to be at variance with the character of the prophecy. The author adopts the hypothesis of Fleming, Sir Isaac Newton, and Lowman, that the 1260 years commenced in A.D. 756; and consequently that the millennium will not begin till the year 2016.

The first beast, chapter xiii. he considers to be Rome papal: the second, to be some anti-christian empire, still future—the last form of antichrist, in which Heathenism, Popery, and Mohammedanism will be combined, as represented by the three unclean spirits. The seat of this new and revived form will be Rome, which is once more to be the capital of the world—the mart of unparalleled commercial enterprise, with the final overthrow of which, the commencement of the millennium will synchronize. The first resurrection is viewed as a literal resurrection of the bodies of the martyrs, who, because their lives were cut short by reason of their adherence to Christ, are to have the precedence of the other dead saints, in point of time, by a period of a thousand years. Their reign with the Redeemer, however, will not be on earth, but in heaven.

As all the trumpets are regarded as belonging to the future, no attempt is made to interpret the eighth and ninth chapters; and indeed, on the same principle of future aspect,

many other portions of the book are left unexplained.

We are happy to state, that the author considers the seven epistles to relate strictly to the seven churches to which they are specifically addressed, and not to be prophetic of so many successive periods or states of the church, from the beginning of Christianity to the consummation of all things.

To several of the exegetical remarks, irrespective of any reference to prophecy, we demur. Thus, after Lowman, the ἀγγέλος, or messenger, ch. i. 1, is interpreted, not of Christ *personally*—the word, it is affirmed, being “intended to signify, that the glorious being who appeared to John, was not actually the Saviour, but only a vision.” The arguments in support of his interpretation are, that Christ did not leave his mediatorial throne; and that his humanity is not ubiquitous. On reconsideration, the author will, we doubt not, alter his opinion; for we are certain he is not prepared to carry the principle to its legitimate length, and assert with Lowman, that “the pillar of fire that went before the Israelites is called God’s angel.” Nor would he, for the sake of consistency, maintain, that Paul’s vision of the Lord Jesus is to be viewed *impersonally*. How the conferment of the morning star, chap. ii. 28, should signify union to Christ in the closest and most endearing bonds, we are at a loss to fathom. The interpretation of the book of life, chap. iii. 5, is utterly untenable, as it must appear to any one who will compare what is said of this book, chapters xiii. 8, xvii. 9, and xx. 12, 15. Nothing would be more absurd, than to explain the phrase in these passages of a catalogue of merely nominal Christians; or, as Dr.

Doddridge expresses it, those who were to be *considered* heirs of the kingdom of heaven, in consequence of their Christian profession. But, if in the other instances where the phrase occurs, it cannot by any possibility signify such a catalogue, what authority have we to attach this meaning to it here? Surely the declaration, “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,” cannot present any difficulty. It is obviously equivalent to: He shall certainly inherit eternal life. Equally untenable is the assertion contained in the same note, that in no case in which persons are spoken of as “elect,” “chosen,” or “sealed,” is there a reference to any absolute decree of God; except, indeed, the author means individuals who are specifically mentioned by name. That ἐκλεκτοὶ and ἐκλογή are used of real personal election, and not of a mere *apparent* selection from the men of the world, as the Arminians affirm, is clear from Rom. viii. 33; xi. 7; 2 Thess. xi. 14; Titus i. 1. But we have already transgressed our limits, and conclude this notice by expressing our sincere wish, that the present additional effort to throw light on the Book of the Revelation may be crowned with success.

The “Lectures on the Book of Daniel,” by Dr. Cox, were delivered during last winter, on the Sabbath afternoons, with the view of guarding the church and congregation under his care against the prevalent misconceptions of the day, on the subject of prophecy, and especially of the prophecies of Daniel. Of these lectures an “outline” is presented in the work before us, which, besides proving peculiarly valuable as a remembrancer to those who heard

the discourses in full, will be found a very useful manual to all who are desirous of rendering themselves familiar with the book of Scripture which forms the basis of exposition. It contains a sound application of the symbols of prophecy, followed up by practical reflections on the various subjects which are brought before the reader. Only we do not think with Dr. C. that "it is now generally agreed that Faber has suggested the only correct interpretation of" Daniel's little horn, chap. viii., considering it as descriptive of the rise, progress, and destruction of Mohammedanism. So far as we have had an opportunity of judging, we should say, that most of the moderns, deserving of notice, who have written on the subject, retain the ancient and commonly received opinion, which applies this prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes. The numerals 2300, ver. 14, do not refer to days or years, but to the number of lambs of which the daily sacrifice consisted, which was to be interrupted by the erection of the heathen altar: consequently if reduced to days, the number will be 1150, which nearly corresponds with the period specified in 1 Macc. i. 54; iv. 52. The phrase in the original is ערב בקר, *evening—morning*, and occurs nowhere else. It must, therefore, have some peculiarity of meaning, and must have been intended to express something very different from יום or ימים *day or days*, which are otherwise invariably used. The daily sacrifice consisted of two lambs, of which one was offered in the evening, and the other in the morning of every day: so that to this the language will strictly apply. The amplification of this prophecy in the eleventh

chapter, where Dr. C. admits of its application to Antiochus, completely overturns Mr. Faber's theory, and confirms the view which we have just given of it. We cordially recommend the work to the attention of our readers.

Letters on Mechanics' Institutions; the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, &c.; between O. S. and the Rev. G. Redford, M. A.; first published in Berrow's Worcester Journal for September 19th and 26th, and October 3d and 10th, 1833. Worcester: Tymbs and Deighton.

ROBERT HALL, in one of his splendid sermons, and Mr. Foster, in his noble Essay on "Popular Ignorance," unanswerably enforce the importance, and illustrate the "advantages, of knowledge," to the mass of mankind; and, obviously, in accordance with the uniform teachings of holy Scripture. But, plain as the matter appears to impartial inquirers, there are those who, deprecating its diffusion, would have science itself "confined to chartered societies and sectarian universities, and nobody initiated but the orthodox."

And, just in proportion as a spirit of inquisitiveness, the natural and happy result of education, not to say of Bible and other excellent Societies, discovers itself among the *people*, the fears alluded to seem to increase: their slaves look on with indescribable forebodings; and are almost thrown into convulsions by the appearance even of the "Penny Magazine."†

We have at times been so exceedingly amused when conversing with, or reading the crude productions of this class of the community, (always, be it observed, state clergymen, or laymen of the same church) as to exclaim, "Well, you

have been using the "perfect form" for years, nay, often every Sunday; you have said rather ostentatiously, "thy kingdom come;" you have heaped plentifully upon those who are not so constant in that identical phraseology, harsh and uncharitable reflections; but now that the kingdom really is *coming*; now that those principles which in professed Christendom have invested an order of men with reputed sanctity, as if for the better delusion of the populace; now that the exclusiveness of Popery, under the garb of Protestantism, now that the system which seems to secularize religion, by making it an engine for emolument or ambition, are, one and all, being subjected to that scrutiny which is inseparable from increasing intelligence, you are frightened out of your wits."

The individuals in question have been accustomed to cry out upon the slightest general movement of the mental powers—No Popery: The church is in danger. But these bugbears having nearly vanished, just as witches and apparitions have done before the well-informed, their apprehensions now, and for the same reason, fall foul upon "Mechanics' Institutes;" "the Society for diffusing useful Knowledge;" "Literary and Philosophical Institutions;" and above all, "the London University." In each of these (for they are of "modern date") they would have us believe they descry a box like Pandora's, that will scatter as many evils, and as dire, as the plagues of Egypt.

In their phrenzy they forget, however, what vast multitudes, at least equally pious with themselves, equally intelligent, equally attached to the Bible, and equally desirous to serve the interests of the Re-

deemer, regard the "signs" that so much distress *them* with cheerful gratitude; and discerning in every agent of *useful*, as well as *religious* instruction, a helper to human happiness and national stability, they rejoice exceedingly. Having neither unhallowed interests nor consecrated nonsense to protect, nor the slightest fear for *that* church which alone is known to the New Testament, they welcome the advancing light. With a view to evil, *as such*, whether connected with human beings, or systems, or institutions, they listen most complacently to the solemn denunciation of the Deity, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is." Ezek. xxi. 27. The *repetition* of that emphatic word, by the way, is uncommonly instructive, and presents, if we mistake not, an aspect of awful sternness to those who, whether by their horrors or their efforts, proclaim reluctance to those improvements in this world's circumstances which are inevitable.

One of the fraternity alluded to lately sounded an alarm through the "Worcester Journal," in a letter which Mr. Redford, who lives in that city, has shown, with his usual eloquence and point, to be full of "gratuitous assumptions, unsupported criminations, covered malignity," or "unparalleled imbecility." The writer took shelter under the signature of "O. S.," but he has received his reward: he has been taught, that if the idolaters of custom, and of things established and old, merely because they are so, *will* "meddle," it may be worth their while to suppress their lucubrations, lest their bigotry and selfishness, as well as folly, should be exposed.

We thank Mr. Redford for keeping watch over such weak-minded

zealots, and we hope that, if they should be unable to acquire discretion sufficient to insure taciturnity, they will, at least, manifest, in future, a temper approaching honesty: candour, we fear, is unattainable. We cannot help remarking how singularly dishonourable it appears for them just to put forth their little horns of slander and misrepresentation, *anonymously*, and then, as in the instance before us, to withdraw them, after the manner of snails, at the first approach of danger. Had they strength of nerve sufficient for the endurance, we should recommend to them a sermon once preached by that prodigy of intellect and piety, Dr. John Owen, from Heb. xii. 27. It is entitled the *Shaking and Translating of Heaven and Earth*.

One extract from Mr. Redford's animated and conclusive replies, is all for which we can afford space. The pamphlet will, we trust, have an extensive circulation. It ought to have been published in London.

"He," that is O. S. "has usurped the office of a prophet, without the gift of foresight—and ventured to publish his zeal for the Lord, without remembering that an imprudent friend is more dangerous than an open enemy. He cannot affirm that he has detected infidelity, yet the grounds of his impeachment seem to be, Christianity is not taught; therefore your University, your Institutions, your Useful Knowledge publications, are to be condemned. But is Christianity taught in Schools of Medicine and Schools of Law? And if not, are they necessarily infidel? Does the Royal Society, the Royal Institution, the British Institution, promote infidelity because they confine themselves to the Arts and Sciences? Is the Society of Antiquaries a Society of Infidels because they do not teach Christianity? I could prove that there has

been more Christianity taught in some of our Mechanics' Institutions than in some endowed Colleges; and that at the present moment there is more active infidelity, more barefaced immorality, at Cambridge and Oxford, than among any equal number of the members of our humble institutions. I will still further inform the calumniator of the London University that his base insinuation against that Institution falls back upon himself. He says, "the student is not forbidden to attend a place of worship or to possess a copy of the Scriptures," wishing his readers to infer that they are at least discouraged from attending to these duties. Now, Sir, the fact is, that they are enjoined to perform these duties, and that a monthly report is made to the parents and guardians whether these duties are or are not performed. I will, moreover, take upon me to affirm, that the conduct of the students at the London University will stand a comparison with that of the students at any University or College in the United Kingdom. But O. S. has evidently professed to enlighten the public on a question of which he is profoundly ignorant. Thus he admits quite enough for the entire refutation of all his charges. He cannot find fault with the lectures nor the class books of the University. But if not, then, why charge it with an infidel tendency? Has the London University—has the Useful Knowledge Society—has any Lecturer at Mechanics' Institutes produced any work of science half so objectionable as the published Lectures of the Geological Professor at King's College? Does O. S. know that by condemning these Institutions he has exposed himself to the reproof, "physician, heal thyself." But O. S. knows that no work of the Useful Knowledge Society is tainted with deism or infidelity; yet he does not know how formidable an attack upon the Mosaic cosmogony and chronology has recently emanated from an institution, of which the head of the Church is patron. Assuredly before he next impeaches the London University he will look at home, and happy will it be for him if his late indiscretion should teach him a little more moderation, and unteach him a great deal of his bigotry."—p. 7.

NEW PUBLICATIONS, WITH SHORT NOTICES.

The Case of the Dissenters, in a Letter addressed to the Lord Chancellor. Third Edition. London: E. Wilson. 1834. The Dissenters' Appeal; a Letter to the Right Hon. Earl Grey. By "Vox Clamantis." London: Jackson and Walford.

THE present is a most important period in Dissenting history. They are rousing themselves, and but just rousing themselves from the long lethargy that has oppressed them, and preparing themselves for a vigorous and systematic attempt to gain a redress of their grievances. And as they are now becoming ready to act, so, what is of at least equal importance, they are preparing to act with something like unity; for though a few may be willing to bring before the legislature, a premature, and therefore unsuccessful discussion of the question of the "Alliance," the greater, and we may add the more sober part, are of opinion that a more extensive agitation of that question is necessary before we can bring it before the legislature in a way that will not discredit, disgrace, and defeat us.

It is curious, that where all are agreed as to the end, there should be some who will not take into consideration the *means*, or that any should suppose that one cannot have a good object in view, without setting all the dictates of prudence and common sense at defiance. However, we hope that certain late occurrences will teach wisdom by experience.

The pamphlets whose titles stand at the head of this article, are both well worthy of an attentive perusal. They both contain a calm, open, and forcible statement of all the principal grievances of which dissenters complain, and a strong but temperate, and the more strong because temperate, demand for redress. "The Case of the Dissenters," we are happy to see, has already passed into the third edition. It is written with great simplicity, and not more commended by its matter than by its style.

We observe that both pamphlets
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address themselves finally to the separation of Church and State, and in this they are quite right; this unnatural and unchristian alliance is, there can be no doubt, the great source, not only of all the grievances that affect dissenters, but of all the sad abuses which obscure the lustre and depress the cause of Christianity. A more full, a more frequent discussion of the subject alone, in a word, agitation of the subject alone, is wanted to give us such strength in the House of Commons, as shall entitle the expression of our opinion to at least a respectful hearing. Till then, we would by all means prevent the question from coming before the legislature, just, in fact, *for the same reason*, which the advocates of an opposite cause profess to have in view; simply, that it may not be retarded. We are confident that it *would* be so, if brought before the legislature immediately.

We recommend these pamphlets cordially to the attention of all our readers. It is but right to say, that the author of the latter pamphlet, "Vox Clamantis," has taken up several points which have been before but little noticed, but which deeply affect the interests of dissenters. The following are short specimens from both.

"Then it is said, that whatever is allowed in favour of the voluntary principle, it is not sufficiently *steady* and *permanent* to be relied on. If by its want of permanence is meant, that it will not continue its support irrespective of the state of religion, and of the services and merits of its ministers, then I claim this as a peculiar excellence. It is a faithful indicator of the presence and power of religion; it fails where it is not, and shows the true state of the place; and it lives and flourishes where it is, and in its turn contributes eminently to its expansion and permanence. To do more than this; to supply the outward form and body of religion, except as true religion is near to sustain and animate it, is to do too much; it is to deceive the eye with the appearances of life, when there is no life; and it is to propagate death age after age. The small portion of the dissenting church
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which is endowed, is rather like a sepulchre than a sanctuary. Germany has an endowed church, where religion is on the surface, but where neology is beneath. France has an endowed church, where religion is professed, but where infidelity is real; and every where it is found to present the most formidable obstacle to the spread of vital religion."—*Case*, p. 30.

"It is, I conceive, the duty of a Christian Government to render the erection and maintenance of places of worship of every denomination, as easy and as cheap as possible, for this reason; that even those sects which may be deemed (and perhaps justly) the most unscriptural, do at least inculcate morality and obedience to the civil magistrate; and in proportion as a nation is moral, the less expensive will be the administration of the laws, especially with reference to the criminal code. But our meeting-houses are never paid for. The statute of Mortmain, by an operation which we would hope was never intended to apply to places of worship, subjects us to perpetual expense. A Church once erected, whether by subscription or by a private individual, simply needs to be kept in repair. The title to the ground once ascertained, and the building dedicated to public worship, the question of property is permanently settled. But owing to the anomalous situation Dissenters occupy in the eye of the law, the expenses of trust-deeds in perpetuity are entailed upon us. Taking the average renewal of these instruments to be once in twenty or twenty-five years, and reckoning the number of our meeting-houses to be 8,500 (which is below their number), and the expense of every deed to be at least £12 (which is not above the mark), we incur an expense of at least £40,000 every ten years, to ensure our right and title to our own property."—*Appeal*, pp. 32, 33.

Justification in the Sight of God; being the Substance of a Sermon delivered Feb. 3, 1833, on the Death of the Rev. John Rees; with a Memoir and an Appendix of Observations from eminent Divines, illustrative of the vital Topic discussed. By Henry Heap, Minister of Bury Street Chapel. Hamilton and Co. 12mo. pp. 160.

WHEN we read the productions of Mr. Heap, we almost seem to be carried backwards on the road of time, one hundred and fifty years. Without the appearance of design, still less

of imitation, and far from the *inania grandia* of some poor moderns, stalking in plumes borrowed from Hooker and Jeremy Taylor, our author has much of the manner of Owen, Flavel and Bunyan, because he thinks and feels as they thought and felt. We must suppose that our best old writers have been well read by him; that he has fed his soul upon them by night and by day, and that their sentiments and diction have been seeds in the ground of his heart; so that the resemblance in the fruit has been the result of a fair intellectual process, a true germinating, a slow growing, and a natural fructification.

The late Mr. Rees was his particular friend. Both have had to pass through the trial of being followed, praised, and claimed by persons of Antinomian tendencies; both have been distinguished by quaintnesses of expression, and, perhaps, some instances of unguarded phraseology, which might well occasion misapprehension; and both have had to undergo some degrees of rejection and reproach from former partizans, who were not well-pleased to find that they so held the doctrines of grace as not to impair the obligations of God's unchangeable law upon believers, or the claims of his Gospel on the unconverted. We may add, that both also have suffered from suspicion and alienation, with respect to the general body of orthodox Dissenters, who, equally with themselves, preach Christ crucified, the doctrine according to godliness.

Mr. Ree's usefulness in Gloucestershire and in London was great. With a warm heart, and much power of manner, he preached the glory of Jesus, in his redemption and righteousness, love and power. His final illness, long and very painful, put his principles to a severe trial; and their triumph was worthy of their truth and goodness. One, out of many instances, occurring in this Memoir, is furnished by the Rev. John Leifchild.

"I put it to him seriously, in the prospect of death, to give me the exact state of his mind: 'Mr. Rees, I may survive you; I may have to tell whether Christianity was able to support you in these moments; let me know exactly what you feel.' I saw him touched: this appeal

to the honour of his religion, roused him ; it freshened his dying lamp : raising himself, he looked me full in the face, and, with great deliberation, energy, and dignity, uttered the following words: *Christ in his person, Christ in the love of his heart, and Christ in the power of his arm, is the rock on which I rest ; and now (reclining his head gently on the pillow,) death, strike !*"

The subject of the Sermon, characteristic both of the preacher, and of his departed friend, is the grand text, Rom. viii. 33, *It is GOD that JUSTIFIETH*. The composition is rapid, familiar, sometimes colloquial, and occasionally digressive: and in the matter there is a fulness and heart-touching power, which interests and edifies us greatly. The digressions to which we have adverted seem to have been subsequently worked into the sermon to obviate some misapprehension, jugulate some plausible error, or vindicate some momentous truth. For the same purposes, we conceive, are the notes and a large appendix added, in which we find valuable citations from Luther, Calvin, Hooker, Owen, Jacomb, Edwards, Ridgley, Rawlin, and many others. Mr. Heap bears an ardent protest against "the absurd and pernicious sentiment of *eternal justification*;" of which he says that the advocates "almost invariably draw false inferences from true premises; and, by a plausible appearance of truth, propagate with unwearied and restless activity their undigested, preconceived opinions and demoralizing sentiments; thereby deceiving the hearts of the simple and betraying the unwary; denouncing with overbearing clamour all as Arminians, Baxterians, and Fullerites, who question their lofty pretensions, and entertain doubts of their superior orthodoxy and sanctity."—p. 140.

A portrait of Mr. Rees, an excellent likeness, and well-engraved, is prefixed to this useful volume, which is not so much a funeral sermon as an emphatical declaration of fundamental gospel principles the test, as the great Reformer used to declare, of a standing or a falling church.

Meditation, with Self-Examination, for every Day in the Year. Hamilton, Adams, and Co. pp. 224. 18mo.

Church and State in America, inscribed to the Bishop of London. By Calvin Colton, M.A. London, Westley and Co. 8vo.

THIS is a most seasonable and appropriate pamphlet, containing a complete refutation of the statements of the Bishop of London, Dr. Dealtry, Mr. Lorimer, the *Christian Observer*, and many other church writers, who have endeavoured to depreciate the state of American religion that they might laud and magnify the many blessings which established churches confer upon this country, by comparing the condition of the United States with our own. Mr. C. has turned the tables upon the Bishop in a most courteous and yet complete manner. He has also settled the question of Dr. Dwight's often quoted authority with equal success. We shall however advert to this subject again.

My Ten Years Imprisonment in Italian and Austrian Dungeons. By Silvio Pellico. 12mo. Second Edition. Whittaker and Co.

SILVIO Pellico is an Italian poet, and much honoured by his countrymen for his literary productions. Having been suspected of *Carbonarism*, he was taken under the especial care of the paternal sovereign of Austria; and how he was treated under the iron despotism of that member of the Holy Alliance, this work most affectingly discloses.

It is delightful to read the evidence of the influences of the Bible upon the mind of this interesting captive, and to perceive that under the maddening effects of solitary confinement, his mind was calmed by the holy truths of Christianity. The book has all the poetic interest of a work of fiction, and possesses, at the same time, that internal evidence of its truth, which we think will satisfy every candid mind.

We are happy this little volume has reached a second edition, and we can promise our readers much gratification in its perusal.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

WORKS AT PRESS, OR IN PROGRESS.

A Pocket Expositor of the New Testament, designed for Christians of all Denominations. By T. Keyworth.

Michlindok. By the Author of *Balam*. 12mo.

The Value of Money. By Mrs. Barwell. 18mo.

The Teacher's Offering for 1833.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL DISSENTERS.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIES OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION TO THE REV. DR. HEUGH, AND THE OTHER SECRETARIES OF THE GLASGOW VOLUNTARY CHURCH SOCIETY.

IN our last Number we inserted an admirable letter from the Secretaries of the Glasgow Voluntary Church Society, (pp. 53, 54.) to the Congregational Union, our readers will therefore feel interested in the following reply.

GENTLEMEN.—The Committee of your excellent Society have not misconstrued the language of the documents published by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, to which references are made in your esteemed letter of Dec. 16.

Descended from those illustrious and holy men who, during the English commonwealth, renounced ecclesiastical establishments, and the interposition of the magistrate in religious concerns, our churches have inherited and acted upon their principles, and have uniformly felt it to be a religious duty to maintain by a meek, yet firm testimony, the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ. For many generations that testimony, though practically exemplified by them, has been disregarded by their countrymen, until, at length, Divine Providence has most unexpectedly excited the public mind, by the course of national events, to inquire into the primitive constitution, and the legitimate resources of the Christian Church.

Having found our authority for the voluntary principle of church support in the writings of the Apostles of Christ, and knowing, by experience, the efficiency it possesses, when called into operation, by the motives which the New Testament suggests, we feel that we should betray our convictions, and compromise our characters, were we, at such a crisis as the present, to withhold from an enquiring people those principles of church polity

which are endowed to us by the authority of our Lord, the sufferings of our forefathers, and the remembrance of the many joys of Christian fellowship we have realized in their practical observance.

You, dear Sirs, have therefore most justly inferred the satisfaction with which our Body beheld their Christian brethren, of different denominations, in Scotland, protest against all national establishments of religion, and how cordially we respond to the sentiments that have been so ably stated by your various publications upon that important question.

True, indeed, it is, that we had not anticipated that the most strenuous efforts to dissolve the unscriptural alliance between Church and State would have first been made in your country, where the ecclesiastical establishment seems to be less corrupt than in our own; but we rejoice to find that it is so, as it strengthens our minds in the conviction, that no church allied to the state can justify that connection, or possibly escape the deterioration which it produces, and which, sooner or later, will occasion the neglect, if not the contempt, of the people whom it was intended to instruct and conciliate. Doubtless, you are prepared to ask, "If such things are done in the green tree, what should be done in the dry?" and if a Presbyterian Church, like that of Scotland, cannot avoid the searching process of public inquiry, but must endure in its principles and polity the test of the Word of God, why should a prelatical establishment, so corrupt in itself, and so uncourteous and exclusive towards others, as that of the Church of England, escape from a similar scrutiny, or avoid the same infallible test? We frankly reply, most assuredly it cannot; the public mind is now directed to these inquiries, and our Body feel it to be their duty to assist their countrymen in the prosecution of them. For while they think it desirable, that the Dissenters of England should act through

those societies which already exist amongst us, yet we can assure you they are prepared to move through those associations with an energy and combination, which we trust may redeem the time we have lost by inactivity.

At the same time we are happy to inform you, that there are many individuals in the metropolis, and all the large towns of our country, who, though they are not prepared to avow themselves Dissenters, are still desirous to see the alliance between their Church and State dissolved, and, doubtless, upon their minds a powerful impression might be produced, were the arguments and claims of Voluntary Church Societies brought before them by the eloquence of well-selected delegates from your Associations.

The advocates of church establishments in this country are now anxious to conciliate the poor, and to employ the press in favour of their unscriptural institutions, and it is, consequently, the duty of those who are conscientiously attached to a system which they believe to be approved of heaven, to make known their opinions through all the avenues of approach to the public mind.

Dissenters of almost every denomination in this land will therefore, we doubt not, be found ready to co-operate with any enlightened efforts, that your Societies may undertake to give greater publicity to those sentiments for which you plead,—sentiments, be it remembered, in conformity to which their own churches are constituted.

We venture to hope that the Voluntary Church Societies of the North have, like ourselves, taken measures to secure complete statistical returns of the ecclesiastical bodies of their country, because we are deeply convinced that such documents will demonstrate, that the people voluntary tax themselves for the support of religion to an extent far beyond the amount which the most potent government would dare to impose for similar purposes.

We cannot conclude this letter without expressing our sympathy with you on the spirit of hostility which your testimonials have excited. That unconverted ministers in the eccle-

siastical establishments of both countries should personally resent our efforts to withdraw the patronage of the State from their respective churches would seem to be the very natural displeasure of worldly minds, but that evangelical ministers, who own our God as their Father, our Redeemer as their Saviour, and our Sanctifier as their Comforter and Guide; that such men should renounce the affections and decline the intercourse of our Christian brotherhood, because we have presumed to bear a public testimony to the truth, is, indeed, most lamentable and extraordinary. Do they not know that, for the sake of Christian co-operation and united effort, we have long borne with their opinions, though we regard them to be erroneous? and are the circulation of the Bible, the education of the poor, and the conversion of heathen objects, so little dear to their hearts, that they are prepared to sacrifice them for the gratification which such pitiful revenge may afford? We pray God that they may be brought to a more just sense of the duties of Christian forbearance and fraternal regard. Be that as it may, we trust that in this enterprize the cost has been computed. All extensive religious reformatations have been effected by individual sacrifices; and if we are the faithful servants of the King of Martyrs, we, in our turn, must be prepared to endure the estrangement of our brethren, and be content to be accounted "their enemies, because we tell them the truth." For us, however, there is no alternative. Too long have we suffered the ancient testimonies of our forefathers to slumber—too long have we been silent, while souls have perished. We feel that our allegiance to the King of Zion requires, and that the providence of God commands us to declare, with all meekness and fidelity, that the Church, which he has redeemed with his own blood, asks not, needs not, admits not, the sword of the magistrate to maintain her existence, nor the purse of the nation to replenish her stores.

That He "who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession" may enrich you and your honoured colleagues with a large measure of his Holy Spirit, to fit you to advance

the interest of his kingdom, is the fervent wish of,

Rev. and Dear Sirs,

Your's faithfully,

JOHN BLACKBURN, }
W. S. PALMER, } *Secretaries.*
JOSHUA WILSON. }

ON CONGREGATIONAL PETITIONS TO PARLIAMENT.

In another part of this Magazine our readers will find copies of several Memorials that have been presented to his Majesty's Government, and we rejoice that many more have been forwarded to the Premier, which we shall give in a future number. It is, however, highly necessary that our readers should bear in mind these have only been supplied for the information of Government; and that an impression can only be produced on Parliament by *Petitions*; and we trust that there is not a dissenting congregation in the three kingdoms that will omit to prepare a temperate and firm appeal to the legislative bodies in support of our claims.

The London Committee of the Congregational Union have felt anxious, as far as practicable, to facilitate the work, and therefore have adopted a brief draught of a petition, which they do not, however, publish as a form to be employed by our Churches, for nothing would be more undesirable than a monotonous uniformity on such a subject, but as supplying an outline from which can be varied, in phrase and sentiment, at the pleasure of the parties.

"To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled.

"The humble Petition of the undersigned Congregational Dissenters residing in and near —

"Sheweth—That your Petitioners hold the principles of those nonconformists who for more than two centuries have maintained that the power of the Christian Church is purely spiritual, and that it neither requires nor admits political or civil power to enforce its laws, or to exact its supplies

"That your Petitioners therefore feel, that when the authority of human laws is employed, either to promote or impede any particular form of Church

Polity, it not only interferes with the exclusive prerogatives of the divine Founder of the Christian faith, but also, as they conceive, in opposition to justice and sound policy, prefers one denomination to all others, and favours one portion of the people for their opinions, to the practical dishonour of all those who differ from them, but who, as loyal and useful subjects, are equally entitled to public esteem and confidence.

"Your Petitioners regard this impolitic alliance of a particular ecclesiastical system with the civil power as the source of those specific grievances which they will now respectfully state, hoping that they will receive the early and favourable attention of your Right Honourable House.

"Your Petitioners humbly but earnestly require a legal Registration of Births, Marriages, and Deaths, without submitting to religious rites to which they conscientiously object; they complain of their compulsory conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the Established Church in the celebration of Marriage; they are aggrieved by their exclusion from the privileges of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham, and by the denial of the right of Burial by their own ministers, and according to their own forms in parochial cemeteries; but they especially complain of their liability to pay Church Rates and other ecclesiastical demands, and to serve the office of Churchwarden in favour of a communion from which they conscientiously dissent.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray your Lordships will take these their grievances to your early and serious consideration, with a view to their entire and immediate removal.

"And your Petitioners will ever pray."

Petitions may be engrossed on strong writing-paper, as well as parchment, and may be forwarded by post to County or other Members of Parliament, if *their ends be left open*, and *Petition to Parliament* be inscribed thereon. The Petitions should, if possible, be in the hands of the Members by the 1st of March, and if directed to them at the House of Lords or Commons, they will safely come to hand. They may also be forwarded to

Mr. Richard Winter, Secretary to the United Committee, who will place them in the hands of our Parliamentary friends in either House, where the Petitioners do not possess local influence with Members.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF IRELAND.

THE Annual Meeting of the Union was held at Richhill, on Thursday, November 28th, 1833, an introductory sermon having been preached the preceding evening by the Rev. N. Shepperd, of Newry.

A prayer-meeting for the divine blessing on the engagements of the day was held in the morning of Thursday. Business commenced at one o'clock, the Rev. W. Browne, of Moy, in the chair. The Rev. N. Shepperd, one of the Secretaries, read the Report; and the following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

1. That the Report now presented, including a brief statistical account of the Congregational Denomination in this country, be printed and circulated under the direction of the Committee.

2. That this meeting cordially acknowledge the affectionate communication received from the Union for England and Wales, and express the hope that the Committee will be able to appoint some brother to represent this Union at the Annual Meeting in London, in May next.

3. That a special General Meeting of this Union be held (D. V.) in Dublin, as early as convenient in next April.

4. That the Treasurer, Secretaries, and Committee for the past year do continue in office until the above Meeting.

The Rev. J. Carlile, of Belfast, delivered an address on the principles of Congregationalism viewed in connexion with the present extraordinary movement in this country. The meeting concluded with praise and prayer.

At a meeting of the Committee, Rev. W. Browne in the Chair, it was unanimously resolved:—

That the "Irish Congregational Record" be the official organ of this Union to the public; and that through it may be expected authentic reports of our proceedings.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD.

THE Ministers of our denomination in the Metropolis voted a memorial to Earl Grey, and the rest of his Majesty's Ministers, at a special meeting of the Congregational Board, held at the Library, Blomfield Street, on Monday Evening, Jan. 20th.

As this important document has not yet been published, we are not at liberty to insert it in our pages in the Transactions of the present month; but we are happy to say, that it is a religious document, worthy of the principles and character of those who have subscribed it.

Our readers will recollect, that twelve months ago, the Board put into Earl Grey's hand, a memorial of grievances (vide Congregational Mag. Feb. 1833), which was enforced by the statements of a Deputation. The present document relates, therefore, to the higher, the religious principles of the great questions now before the mind of the country.

MONTHLY MEETING AT THE POULTRY CHAPEL.

THE first Lecture of the year was delivered at the Poultry Chapel, on Thursday Morning, Jan. 9th, by the Rev. James Bennett, D. D. The doctor founded a long and very able discourse upon Luke xix. 41, and Rev. xviii. 16. "*And when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it. Alas! Alas! that great city.*" The subject—"The Duty of the Churches in London and its Vicinity in reference to the spiritual wants of the Metropolis." Prayers were offered by the Rev. J. Hunt and the Rev. Dr. Smith.

The company, more numerous and respectable than has for a long time assembled at a monthly meeting, afterwards dined together at the Library, and gentlemen freely expressed the pleasure they felt in being present now they are permitted to pay for their entertainment.

After dinner an animated, but most friendly discussion took place respecting the printing of the sermon, when all professed their concurrence in the general sentiments it contained, though some demurred on questions of taste.

Dr. Bennett's reply to these fraternal remarks were most manly and devoted, and the company separated with their impressions of the integrity, zeal, and piety, of the preacher, greatly strengthened by the engagements of the day. We scarcely need assure our readers, that the statements that have been circulated in certain *veritable* newspapers, are quite in keeping with the system which for some time their conductors have thought it right and advantageous to pursue.

LEWISHAM CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL.

On Monday, Dec. 9th, was held the half-yearly examination of the pupils at the Congregational School, Lewisham, in the presence of Dr. Bennett, Mr. Rose, of Bermondsey, and Mr. Bishop, of Homerton College, with a few other Friends of the Institution.

The subjects of examination were the Latin and Greek Languages, Geography, and the Holy Scriptures. In Latin and Greek the different classes were required to read passages fixed upon at the time by the examiners. In Geography questions were proposed without reference to any book, and the answers were generally prompt and satisfactory. Both readiness and accuracy were very pleasingly evinced

in the answers to the questions from the Holy Scriptures. In this department the pupils were not taken in classes, but were all united, and questions were put to each in rotation. The history of man, as represented in the Bible, especially his creation, fall, and redemption, formed the chief subject of inquiry. The business of the day was closed by the distribution of prizes of books, which had been previously awarded. Dr. Bennett presented the books, with an appropriate address to each emeritus, and then commended the whole establishment to the blessing of God in prayer.

This school especially claims the attention of the Congregational Dissenters, being founded for the purpose of educating the sons of their ministers, either deceased, or in circumstances that preclude the ability to provide out of their own resources a suitable education for their children. The number of pupils is now greater than at any former period, (thirty-three,) and it is confidently hoped that the friends of the Congregational School will see the necessity of using corresponding exertions to increase the finances, without which the number must be diminished rather than extended.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ROME. *Written by a Physician to his Father in London.*

I hardly know what to say of Rome. From the moment that I caught the first glimpse of the eternal city, as marked at a distance of eighteen miles by the dome of St. Peter's, when the postillions, rising in their stirrups, exclaimed "*ecco Roma!*" up to the present time, it has almost appeared to me that I am the subject of some strange enchantment. I know not whether I have been more pleased with the modern, or the ancient beauties of this place. I did not adopt your recommendation to ride to the Colosseum, nor did the first sight of it produce that impression on me which you might imagine: but this I should say, was mainly to be attributed to my having seen the amphitheatre at

Nîmes, (the ancient Nemausus, in Provence,) whither we went purposely to see the Roman remains of that important ancient colony. Nemausus, or Nîmes, was termed "*Altera Roma*," not only from its magnificence, but from the fact of its being, like Rome, built on seven hills. I forget whether I said any thing of this place, in my last letter. However, nothing hardly ever made so forcible an impression on me as did the sight of this magnificent edifice. It is not nearly so large, indeed, as the Colosseum, but certainly considerably more perfect. The Nîmes Amphitheatre is said to have been capable of containing twenty thousand spectators, allowing sixteen inches for each person. Pliny, I believe, asserts, that the Colosseum held one hundred and fifty thousand spectators. My second visit to the Colosseum astonished

me more than the first. But though I was less impressed than I expected, on first visiting the Colosseum, as an ancient monument; I shall never forget the impression made on my mind by the associations which standing in the arena produced. I knew the purpose for which the building had been erected, and immediately called to mind the bloody scenes that had there been exhibited by the gladiators, &c.; but I did not know that I was treading on the very same soil that had been soaked with the blood of the first martyrs to the Christian religion. Yet so it was. The soil of this arena has never been changed, since the time when Trajan sat amidst the assembled Romans, to witness hundreds of the primitive Christians, at his command, pour out their blood in the arena before him, in testimony of the truth of their religion. And to what purpose do you suppose this same arena is now put? In the centre of it, on a small elevated platform, stands a cross, on which is the following inscription:—"Baciando la santa croce s'aquiltano due centi giorni d'indulgentia."* Placed around the edge of the arena are a number of small altars, each with a picture, the subject of which is either some passage from the history of Christ, or from the legends of some of their first saints. This circle of altars is called the "*Via Crucis*." A number of monks, dressed in a habit which is intended to exhibit the garb of repentance, and veils over their faces, in which were cut two apertures for their eyes, were making the circuit of these altars, with the host uplifted, and performing sacred ceremonies, and chanting certain prayers. Having done so, they, together with various others who accompanied them, each went up to the cross in the centre, severally knelt, and then kissed each side of it. On asking the meaning of this horrid mummerly, I was told they were offering up prayers, and performing these ceremonies for the souls of those who had laid down their lives for religion on the spot where I was standing. But were I to tell you one quarter of the really horrid scenes of this kind that I have seen, you would not only be shocked and sickened, but would hardly credit my recital. I am quite sure that, with all your knowledge of ecclesiastical history, and of the present state of Christendom, you have no adequate notion of half the horrid superstition that is daily practised here.

This morning, at breakfast, Lord***

* By kissing the holy cross two hundred days of indulgence are procured.

N. S. NO. 110.

told me that high mass was to be performed at St. Peter's, it being the anniversary of the consecration of the building. I went. The whole ceremony consisted in a number of shockingly idolatrous superstitions, and some beautiful music. Service, as it was called, was performed by the archbishop, who was dressed in the most gorgeous and expensive robes, and wore a magnificent silk mitre, adorned with the most costly jewels. Every body but himself was uncovered; he, however, wore his mitre, as he sat beside the altar, during the whole time, except when he turned to bow to the cross, at which times one assistant took it off and gave it to a second, after which a third replaced it. He then perambulated the cathedral, descended to the tomb of St. Peter, knelt before his ashes, and wafted incense about the sarcophagus in which they are contained; then, having kissed the feet of a bronze statue of the Apostle, he returned to his place. Had I been told that the whole ceremony was a concert given to please the archbishop, I could have understood it; but really I was at a loss to discover any one thing that a person, in his right senses, could call worshipping the supreme Being.

Processions of various kinds are daily passing through the streets, some of which are of so grotesque and absurd a nature, that it is difficult to keep one's gravity, when they pass, even though you know that they are intended as religious services. Monks of all kinds, and of all garbs; priests, bishops, and cardinals, swarm throughout the city. The cardinals, even in the present day, are surrounded by more pomp and etiquette than our princes of the blood; they must always be attended by a certain number of servants; and there are only certain persons whom they are allowed to take with them in their carriages. On the Sabbath, however, there is certainly much more appearance of religion than there is in France, at least. The shops are more generally shut, even than they are in London, I think; but in the evening all is amusement, and the theatres, which are shut on Fridays, are all open on the Sunday. Friday they profess to keep as a day of fasting and sorrow, in commemoration of the death of Christ; but the Sabbath, they say, was intended to be a day of rejoicing. There is a Protestant English place of worship, just outside of "*Porta del Popolo*," which is extremely well attended. The first sermon I heard here was from the Epistle to the Romans, v. 20. It was certainly an evangelical ser-

mon, but rather meagre. Every Sabbath, however, I go to this church. I have not yet been able to converse with any of the priests here, but shall certainly make some enquiries of them as soon as I am able. The family I am with know many of the cardinals, and I hope to be introduced to some of them. Many of them bear very estimable characters as men. I went with a Capuchin monk through one of their convents, a few days ago. He took me down to a sort of cellar, lighted up with candles, which was their burial place. The earth composing the floor contains a good deal of lime, in consequence of which the bodies that are interred there are very rapidly desiccated, and thus undergo a sort of semi-preservation or embalming. After being left a short time under ground, they are taken up, dressed in the gown they wore during life, and stuck around the room in various positions. The walls were also covered with human skulls and bones, arranged in various grotesque forms, and a few cypresses and flowers were planted here and there. I asked the monk the meaning of all this, to which he replied, that it was intended to remind them of their mortality, and that they came down there to meditate. These men certainly undergo great privations and hardships, which we cannot understand, except by supposing that they are sincere in their opinions. But I must say, that nothing has disgusted me so much in Italy as the apparent idleness of the monks and priests. They are always sauntering, loitering, gaping about, and doing nothing. With regard to the various sights of Rome, I have already seen a good many of them, and am said by Lord *** to have proved myself worthy of the place. I have stood on all the seven hills, wandered frequently through the forums, gazed at the temples of Jupiter Stator, Tonans, &c. passed under the arches of Constantine and Titus, watched the flow of the muddy waters of the "Tiberis flavus," walked in the gardens of Sallust, and wandered amid the ruins of the Aucea Donus, or the palace of the Cæsars. The bas-reliefs on the arch of Titus are still very perfect, and the golden candlestick, the table of shew bread, &c. are as perfect as when they came from the hand of the sculptor. It is quite true that the Jews never pass under this arch. It stands unconnected with any other building, in the middle of the Forum Romanum, to the north of the capitol, between that and the Colosseum. The old Via Sacra, the pavement of which still remains in use, passes under

the arch, and leads on the north side to the Colosseum, Arch of Constantine, and the Temple of Venus and Rome; and on the south side it is supposed to conduct to the capitol. The Tarpeian Rock I have not seen yet. The whole ground on which the present city stands, has risen so much in height, in the course of years, that the Capitoline Hill is now not above sixty or eighty feet high. The site of the Ara Coeli, on the summit of it, is at present occupied by a church bearing the same name, viz. Santa Maria d'Ara Coeli. At the foot of the Capitoline Hill, on the north-west side, is the site of some of the Roman prisons or dungeons; and on the same spot is now a small chapel, always brilliantly lighted, and generally containing a number of people kneeling at the altar. This chapel is called "St. Pietro nel Carcere;" for here, say the Catholics, it was that St. Peter was imprisoned. On the same side of the Capitoline Hill, close at its foot, in the Forum, stands the Arch of Septimius Severus; and a little to the east of this, three magnificent Corinthian pillars, with their frieze and cornice, which are the remains of the Temple of Jupiter Tonans. Among the modern buildings, of course, St. Peter's stands pre-eminent. I never shall forget the impression which the first view of this produced on me. I was literally astounded. I forget, just now, the name of the pope who commenced the present building; but he is said to have intended that the church built over the ashes of St. Peter should vie in splendour with the temple of Solomon. And truly his wish seems to have been accomplished. St. Paul's is a nut-shell, in point of size, compared to this stupendous edifice. I can give you no adequate description of this building, and must content myself with saying, that every thing about it is on a scale of most costly grandeur. Its vastness, when viewed from the interior, surpasses description. Under the centre of the large dome stands the high altar, and beneath this, are the ashes of St. Peter. A flight of marble steps leads down to these relics, which are kept in a golden sarcophagus, guarded by gates of brass, hung on two pillars of costly alabaster. The whole is surrounded by brass balustrades, and illuminated by two or three hundred lamps, on stands of bronze, kept continually burning night and day. At the side of the cross, is the chair of St. Peter, an enormous thing, supported by the four evangelists. The monuments of the popes around the sides are of the most magnificent workmanship. But the prin-

cipal monument of the place is a brazen statue of St. Peter, holding the keys of the Church. The feet of St. Peter are half worn away by the kisses of the multitude; and I myself saw, to-day, a cardinal and a large train of priests go up and give the kiss of superstitious devotion. All the Catholics kneel as they pass this statue. But I am sure you will have had enough of these things.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF DEPUTIES OF THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, TO THE GENERAL MEETING, ON THE 27TH DECEMBER, 1833.

Among the events of the past year, to which your Committee would draw your attention, and upon which it most sincerely congratulates this Deputation, is the passing into a law the bill brought forward by the present Government, having for its objects the speedy and entire extinction of colonial slavery, and the complete establishment of religious freedom. After an apprenticeship, during which the hours of labour will be considerably shortened, and the infliction of punishment by the arbitrary will of their masters no longer permitted—the slaves, in our colonies, will be free in every respect. The provisions of the 62d Geo. III. by which it is declared to be the right of every man in this country to teach and to preach, will be immediately applied to the population of our slave colonies; and thus the places of worship belonging to the various Missionary Societies, and the worshippers attending there, will be protected from the less lawless outrages of bigotry and intolerance.

The more important objects of this Deputation have, during the last year, been confided to the management of the "United Committee appointed to consider the grievances under which Dissenters now labour, with a view to their redress." To the origin and proceedings of that United Committee a short reference will now be made. On its being announced to the general meeting of this Deputation, in March last, that such a measure was contemplated, they expressed their approbation of it by the following resolution:—

Resolved,

"That this Deputation cordially approve of the steps taken by their Committee, in order to form a United Committee for the purpose of considering the grievances under which the Protestant Dissenters of this kingdom labour, with a view to their redress. And they urge upon the United Committee vigilant attention to any measure of church reform that may be proposed, in order that

the interests of Dissenters may not be overlooked, or their just claims be compromised."

The United Committee have ever since been in active operation. On the 11th of May, they passed resolutions, specifying the following to be amongst the practical grievances of Dissenters, viz.

1. Compulsory conformity to the rites and ceremonies prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer for the celebration of matrimony.

2. Liability to the exaction of church rates, Easter offerings, and other ecclesiastical demands.

3. Alleged liability of places of worship to poor rates.

4. The want of a legal registration of the births and deaths of Dissenters.

5. The denial to Dissenters of the right of burial by their own ministers in parochial church-yards.

6. Virtual exclusion from the benefits of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the want of a charter to the London University.

The grievances above enumerated are the same as were recognized by the resolutions of the General Meeting of Deputies on the 15th March; and they formed the subject of a memorial, which was shortly afterwards presented to Earl Grey by the United Committee.

On the 25th May, the Deputation from the United Committee, appointed to confer with Earl Grey, met with a very courteous reception, and held a very long and interesting conversation with that liberal and enlightened statesman upon the important topics referred to in the memorial. His Lordship intimated that his own sanction, and that of his Majesty's Government, might be expected to any reasonable measures proposed by Protestant Dissenters; and the Bill then pending in Parliament, for exempting Places of Worship from Poor and Church Rates being particularly referred to, his Lordship immediately expressed his approbation of that measure. He also stated, that the question relative to Church Reform in England would not be brought forward during the then session of parliament.

The result of the interview with Earl Grey, and especially his Lordship's assurance that the Bill for reforming the Church of England would not be brought into parliament during the then session, the state of business in both Houses, and the very protracted debates likely to take place on subjects of great national importance (some of them being of special interest to Dissenters, though not immediately connected with them) induced

the United Committee to abstain from any general effort, at that time, for procuring the redress of the grievances in question generally. They, however, took measures for securing the most effective support to the Bill, introduced by Mr. Wilks, for exempting all places of worship from the payment of Church and Poor Rates, which Bill received the royal assent on the 24th of July.

But although the United Committee thought it expedient to postpone general measures until the next session of parliament, they addressed the Protestant Dissenters of England and Wales in a letter signed by their Secretary, and published in the Patriot newspaper of the 10th June, pressing upon them the great importance of preparing petitions to both Houses of Parliament, early in the next session, praying for the removal of the grievances specified, and suggesting also that great advantage would arise from the interval being employed in diffusing information respecting the claims of Dissenters to relief, and urging those claims upon the consideration of Members of Parliament. The United Committee, in that circular letter, further expressed their reliance on the cordial and zealous co-operation of Dissenters generally, and urged them to a prompt and simultaneous expression of their sentiments and wishes on the re-assembling of parliament, strongly recommending the formation, in all large towns and populous districts, of societies and committees for furthering their common object, and the opening of a direct correspondence with the Metropolitan Committee.

In anticipation of the approaching session of parliament, the United Committee have now resumed their operations; and it is confidently expected that before the end of that session some very important progress will be made towards improving the position of Protestant Dissenters.

In the Report of last year, your Committee stated, that a cause was then pending to try the question of an individual's exemption from toll in going to his usual place of worship on Sunday. Without, however, proceeding to trial, or incurring any considerable expence, the point has been ceded by the trustees of the road, who have discontinued to take toll of the plaintiff.

The other matters which have come under the notice of your Committee during the past year, do not appear to them to require particular notice in this Report.

ROBT. WINTER, Secretary.

16, Bedford-row.

A List of the Committee of Deputies, for the Year 1854.

- H. Waymouth, Esq. 17, Bryanston-square, Chairman.
 T. Wilson, Esq. 12, Highbury-place, Deputy Chairman.
 W. Hale, Esq. Homerton, Treasurer.
 Allan, D. Esq. 46, Coleman-street.
 Bartlett, W. P. Esq. 27, Nicholas-lane.
 Brown, J. B. Esq. LL.D. 38, Bedford-place.
 Busk, E. Esq. 4, New-square, Lincoln's-inn.
 Challis, T. Esq. 24, Finsbury-square.
 Cunliffe, R. Esq. 21, Bucklersbury.
 Gale, S. Esq. 70, Basinghall-street.
 Hanbury, B. Esq. 138, Blackfriars-row.
 Houston, S. Esq. 31, Great St. Helens.
 Jameson, W. Esq. Laurence Pountney-lane.
 Lee, R. Esq. Clapham Common.
 Mills, J. R. Esq. 30, Milk-street.
 Montgomery, J. Esq. Brentford.
 Peek, R. Esq. 74, Coleman-street.
 Pewtress, T. Esq. 30, Gracechurch-st.
 Russell, J. Esq. Lant street, Southwark.
 Smith, W. Esq. 5, Blandford square, Regent's-park.
 Wilks, J. Esq. M.P. 3, Finsbury-square.
 Wilson, J. Esq. 12, Highbury-place.
 Wyld, J. Esq. West Strand.
 Yockney, W. Esq. Bedford-street, Covent-Garden.

R. WINTER, Secretary.

16, Bedford-row.

REMARKS ON THE RELIGIOUS STATISTICS OF NOTTINGHAM.

(To the Editors.)

The writer of the article upon the Ecclesiastical Statistics of Nottingham, in your magazine for the last month, has incautiously fallen into a considerable mistake in his statement of the number of persons attending places of worship; he states the population at 50,000, the number of Sunday School Scholars at 6,726, and the number of the congregations, taken together, at 17,800, which is probably correct; he then proceeds to infer that nearly two-thirds of the inhabitants attend no place of divine worship; he seems to have forgotten that the 6,726 Sunday School children constitute a part of the 50,000, and that they all regularly attend on divine worship; they are therefore to be added to the 17,800, and increase the number to 24,526: he was not informed that divine worship is conducted every Sunday in the chief parish workhouse, which contains upon an average 400 inhabitants, to which also it is to be added, that there is worship on the Lord's-day

in both the hospitals and in the prisons; these, together, will probably increase the total number to 25,120, rather more than half the estimated population.

But it may be properly asked what becomes of the other half? It is answered, that it comprehends all the infant children who are capable of attending the services of religion, all the females confined by child-birth, the sick, the aged, and infirm, and the nurses and other persons occupied in the care of them, and those also who are of necessity confined at home on the Sabbath, and these are not few, as no house can be safely left; these taken together cannot be less than three-fifths of the whole, and it will reduce the number of persons capable of attending the services of religion to 35,000; and then the number of persons who wilfully neglect God and religion will be reduced to about 10,000. This is indeed a large number, but it may be properly asked, of what description of persons are they? They may, I apprehend, be ranked under three classes; the first consisting of rude, licentious youths and young men, who spend the Sunday in committing depredations, petty thefts, and other mischievous and licentious practices; many of these fall periodically under the penalty of the law.

The second class, consists of men of ultra-political character, and of deistical and of atheistical sentiments, who spend their Sunday chiefly in public houses, reading upon and discussing their favourite subjects; this class is I hope decreasing.

The third class consists of the very lowest grade of society, persons of idle, dissolute, filthy character, little above the most despised of the animal part of creation.

It may not be improper to advert to the means which are in active use to improve the social, moral, and religious character of the people; these are the public services of religion on the Lord's day and in the course of the week, Sunday schools, weekly and evening schools, the extensive distribution of tracts, chiefly by the weekly loan and exchange of them, the circulation of the Sacred Scriptures by Bible Associations, and the restraining of those who do evil by the exertions of a watchful and active magistracy. All our places of worship are open twice, and some of them three times, on the Sabbath; but they are only partially attended by the same persons, some attending at one, and others at another service, as circumstances permit; so that the actual number of

worshippers, on the Lord's day, is much greater than the places of worship would hold at any one time only. It would be an advantage, if they were all open three, or even four times, although they should be occupied by different denominations, and the pulpits by different ministers; it would render the places themselves more useful, and very materially lessen the expense of providing accommodation for our vast population, but I fear there is not yet good sense and liberality enough to adopt a plan of that kind.

With regard to the social, moral, and religious character of Nottingham, I am of opinion, that it is in a condition of progressive improvement.

I am, Gentlemen,
Yours, &c.

NOTTINGHAMIENSIS.

The number of communicants in the Old Methodist Societies is stated in your report to be 150, instead of 1150; the New Methodist connection is stated to have 340 communicants, which you have not mentioned.

CLAIMS OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN SAILORS' SOCIETY.

The greatness of Britain is acknowledged to depend essentially on her maritime population. British mariners have been the defenders of our shores, from the threatened invasions of ambitious tyrants: and their perilous labours have united us in profitable intercourse with all the nations of the earth. Obligations, therefore, of the most powerful kind, claim the generous sympathy of every individual among all classes of the community, especially in seeking the spiritual welfare of Sailors.

Seamen cannot regularly enjoy Christian ordinances, which are the glory of our peaceful country, even in their most favoured circumstances: while their dangers and temptations, both by sea and on shore, at home and in foreign clime, are peculiar and fearful.

Christian benevolence and zeal have, in our times, done much to elevate and improve the character of sailors: and not a few are now known to be not only scientific in nautical affairs, but intelligent and exemplary in scriptural piety. Still it is notorious, that intemperance, profaneness, and impurity, awfully prevail among seafaring men; but while we reflect upon the influence of their principles and habits in our colonies generally, with the various momentous interests involved in them, and in our numerous missionary stations, with the infant churches of Christ gathered from the brethren, we, with every serious mind

must feel concerned to secure for them the sanctifying means of grace by the gospel.

Solitary individuals, however endowed and zealous, are insufficient to accomplish the great work of evangelizing the hundreds of thousands of British Seamen, and of promulgating the doctrine of salvation to the seamen of all nations. Societies have hitherto but partially succeeded, owing to causes which would paralyze and ruin the most noble designs. The great work yet remains to be accomplished. Worthy efforts have been made at Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, and some other ports: but a united association seems imperatively demanded.

The British and Foreign Sailors' Society contemplates this glorious work; and in this the Port of London Society and Bethel Union have merged their common interests; and now they appeal to every minister and to every member of the British churches, for an interest in their prayers, and for their pecuniary support. A crisis has arrived in our country's history; and the disciples of the Son of God must vigorously prosecute the work of maritime evangelization. Missionary labours among the heathen have been deplorably injured by the licentiousness of British and American seamen; and their operations will be still more awfully impeded in their work of blessing the world, unless energetic measures are taken, in devout dependance on almighty grace to seek the spiritual interests of that important class of society.

The British and Foreign Sailors' Society have at present the Floating Chapel on the river Thames, in which divine service is held twice every Lord's day, when sermons are preached by various ministers, the Wesleyan Methodists taking their turn in these labours. From this depot, religious tracts and books are sent on loan to ships sailing to every part of the world.

Four ministers, with other agents, are engaged on the river, presiding at Bethel Prayer-meetings, and preaching several evenings in the week on board different ships in the Port of London, and distributing religious tracts to the sailors.

A Day and Sunday School, consisting of about 200 children of sailors and watermen, with Master and Mistress, are supported by this Society; and many other plans of usefulness are formed, as funds may be furnished, enabling the Directors to accomplish their contemplated objects.

Missionary Societies are most deeply

interested in forwarding the objects of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society. Statements most heart-rending are constantly reaching us from our missionaries, of the pernicious consequences to their labours, from the intemperate and licentious conduct of British and Foreign Seamen. In proof of our remarks, we need only refer to the recent intelligence from *Tahiti*!

Ministers of the Gospel of all denominations are also deeply interested in the labours and successes of the British and Foreign Sailors Society; especially those in our seaports and manufacturing towns.

Merchants and Manufacturers, and all who are connected with the immense British exports and imports, are also interested in its prosperity; not only for the sake of their characters as Britons, and their principles as Christians, but for the security and preservation of their property.

Auxiliary Societies, both congregational and provincial, should be formed throughout the country in aid of the British and Foreign Sailors Society; that, agreeably to the merciful purpose of our covenant-keeping God, by the ministry of his servants, under the blessing of his Spirit, "the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto Him," and bring perpetual glory to his holy name.

The "*Pilot*," a Monthly Magazine of the Society, will give information respecting its operations, and communications, Subscriptions, and Donations for the Society, are received by its Officers, and Board of Directors.

JOHN PIRIE, Esq. Treasurer,
Freeman's Court, Cornhill.

G. F. ANGAS, Esq. Sub-Treasurer,
Jeffrey's Square, St. Mary Axe.

Rev. A. F. COX, LL.D. } Secretaries.
Rev. THOMAS TIMPSON, }

Society's Rooms.

2 Jeffrey's Square, St. Mary's Axe,
London, Dec. 1833.

OPINION OF THE DISSENTING BODIES
IN THE METROPOLIS ON THE PARLIAMENTARY GRANT.

The *Regium Donum* was a sum of money annually allowed by the Treasury as a royal bounty to Dissenting Ministers. It originated, we believe, in the reign of George II. 1723, when £500 was given at the suggestion of Mr. Daniel Burgess, a son of the celebrated Dissenting Minister of that name, who had been some time Secretary to the Prince of Wales. Lord Townsend and Sir Robert Walpole, for well-known reasons, concurred in the grant, which has been gradually

augmented until it now amounts to something short of £2000 per annum.

On the new arrangements of the Civil List, this annual bounty ceased to be a royal gift, and was therefore denominated the Parliamentary Grant, which is now annually voted, with some other miscellaneous sums, and paid, as aforetime, to a Dissenting Minister, as the receiver named in the Treasury Warrant, who with eight others, three from each denomination, distribute it in small sums to their needy brethren at their discretion.

The distributors are a self-constituted body, and are only responsible to the Treasury, where their accounts have been scarcely ever demanded. Though acting for their brethren, yet, as they exercise no authority over them, their resolutions cannot affect this grant further than as the public and the Parliament shall know, that the great majority of those ministers and other gentlemen who constitute the Board of Dissenting Deputies. The United Committee and the body of Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations, have agreed, that the practice of receiving public money is inconsistent with the generally avowed principles of Protestant Dissenters, and that they deem it highly expedient that it be discontinued. At the General Meeting of the Deputies, it was so determined, and at a very numerous assembly of the three denominations, held on Thursday, the 28th of January, at Red Cross Street Library, a resolution to the same effect was carried by an overwhelming majority.

Should these resolutions cause the annual vote to be discontinued, we trust that our wealthy friends will not permit needy brethren to suffer by the operation of a grand principle, but that the Congregational Fund Board, and the Associate Fund, will be so replenished, that at least our portion of the grant may be made up by the voluntary efforts of the opulent members of our body.

The grant made to the Presbyterians of Ireland is worse in principle, and far heavier in amount, and we shall therefore feel it our duty to invite the attention of our readers to it, in our next number.

LADY HEWLEY'S CHARITIES.

As we anticipated the Unitarian Trustees have appealed against the decision of the Vice Chancellor, and are about to move his Honor to stay the proceedings before the Master, Lord Henley. The religious public will observe, with intense interest, the movements of all parties involved in these extraordinary proceedings.

PROGRESS OF NONCONFORMITY IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX.

Mr. James Fenton, architect, of Chelmsford, has given to the public, through the *Patriot* newspaper, the following particulars respecting the chapels which, during the last two years, he has erected or altered in Essex:—

	Cost.
Braintree Independent Chapel— 69 by 50 feet, containing 1,400 sittings; three galleries; old materials worth 390l.	£1,490
Braintree Baptist Chapel—with three galleries, containing 600 sittings; 51 by 39 feet; old ma- terials, 90l.	845
Halstead Independent Chapel— 60 by 42 feet; three galleries, containing 920 sittings; in the decorated Gothic style.	1,320
Felated Independent Chapel— 48 by 38 feet; one gallery, 450 sittings.	760
Ipswich Chapel—a gallery and staircases, 42 by 17 feet, con- taining 200 sittings.	147
Rev. J. Gray's Chapel, Chelms- ford—a new slated roof; raising walls two feet; and new white brick and stone front and end, with new windows and vestry, 54 by 34 feet.	320
Stebbing Chapel—a new roof, and enlarging vestry, 44 by 33 feet	130
Halstead Baptist Chapel—taking down old end and enlarging, 42 by 20 feet; raising the pulpit, extending galleries, and making two vestries.	307

N. B. The above figures are the internal dimensions of the respective chapels.

Besides these, we are happy to learn, that a small chapel, capable of accommodating 250 persons, has been opened in connection with the Essex Congregational Union, at *Brightlingsea*; and that at Canewdon, near Rochford, a similar chapel has been erected, through the benevolent bequests of a London corn-factor.

These are pleasing evidences of the energy of the voluntary principle.

PATRIOT NEWSPAPER.

We feel much satisfaction in stating, that this respectable and efficient weekly paper, which supplies to Dissenters so necessary an organ of communication with each other, and the public, has, during several past months, been rising in the confidence and support of Evangelical Dissenters in every part of the

kingdom; and we trust that its circulation will continue to increase, until its influence shall be felt in every Dissenting family.

RECENT DEATH.

We have heard that the Rev. James Small, for more than fifty years pastor of the church at Axminster, Devon, has been called to his reward. He for many years presided over the Western Academy, and

we doubt not his removal is deplored by his affectionate people, and a large circle of grateful pupils.

NOTICE.

The Rev. RICHARD GIBBS, of Darlington, has accepted a unanimous call to preside over the Congregational church at Skipton-in-Craven, Yorkshire, where he purposes to enter upon his stated labours the second Sabbath in February.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND MINOR CORRESPONDENCE.

Communications have been received this month from the Rev. H. F. Burder, D. D.—J. Bennett, D. D.—Payne, D. D.—J. P. Smith, D. D.—J. Burder—J. Tennant—J. Saffery, and G. Galloway.

Also from Messrs. W. Stroud, M. D.—J. Thornton—H. Hough—S. D. Mettam—H. and J. C.

The communication from the West shall receive early attention.

We are compelled, by want of room, again to postpone several communications.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of several statistical facts, for which we thank our correspondents, and respectfully urge our readers to oblige us with similar documents, of which they shall hear a good account in due time.